



Your Pastor in the Lord
John Easton

MEMOIRS
OF THE
REV. JOHN EAGLETON

LATE MINISTER OF

Ramsden-Street Chapel, Huddersfield

AND FORMERLY OF COVENTRY, AHERSTON, AND
BIRMINGHAM.

BY HIS DAUGHTER.

AND

RECOLLECTIONS OF HIS MINISTERIAL CHAR-
ACTER AND LABOURS,

BY A MEMBER OF HIS CHURCH AT HUDDERSFIELD.

WITH HIS

S E R M O N

ON THE

PROBABLE DESTINY OF GREAT BRITAIN

HUDDERSFIELD :

PRINTED BY H. ROEBUCK, KING-STREET.

1841.

PREFACE.

By such individuals as knew and valued the man whose life and character a portrait is attempted in this volume, no apology will be deemed necessary for the publication.

It may, however, be well to state some reasons for the appearance at so late a period after the decease of the honoured subject of the memoir.

Some years after Mr. Eagleton's death, a manuscript was found containing a sketch from his own pen, of an earlier portion of his life, (embracing the period from his birth to his entrance upon the ministry,) though not sufficiently connected to be published in its original form, has proved an excellent foundation for the present work. The discovery of this document, though evidently not meant for the public eye

gested to the family, and to some intimate friends of the deceased, the desirableness of an accurate memoir ; and the design would have been put into execution much sooner, had it been intended from the first, that a member of the family should be the compiler. Various quotations from the sketch above referred to, are inserted in the author's own words ; and to many who may peruse this volume, such extracts will doubtless form the chief source of interest.

Another inducement was found in the generally expressed desire for the republication of the annexed sermon ; and the present was thought a favourable opportunity for combining in one book, the sermon, and that which will more effectually revive the remembrance of its Author—a history of the principal events of his life.

To expect beauty of composition or elegance of style in the following pages would be vain. The subject itself will, it is presumed, present the chief attraction to the reader, and the exquisite engraving which has been executed for the work—truly a “ living likeness,” will no doubt invest the work with additional interest in the opinion of the friends of the departed.

Simplicity and truth have been the aim of the writer, and should the pious example here recorded be the means, under the Divine blessing, of stimulating others to walk in his footsteps so far as he followed Christ, the end most to be desired will be accomplished.

It is matter of gratitude and praise to the Giver of all good, that survivors can refer to many individuals, who trace their first spiritual awakening, to the effect produced upon their minds by Mr. Eagleton's stated or casual ministrations ; and who, *since* his removal from the scene of labour, have openly testified concerning the dealings of God with them by his instrumentality. By his hand the precious seed was sown which is now bringing forth fruit unto holiness. And may not the relation of his life and labours be rendered useful in exciting such persons to greater devotedness, and in arousing others to a concern for the things which pertain to everlasting life ? That such, in numerous instances, may be the effects of the present humble attempt is the sincere prayer of

THE WRITER.

MEMOIRS.

AMONG the varieties of history and biography, with which the literature of the present day abounds, there is none, perhaps, less fraught with novelty or romance than that of a minister of the gospel. For those, indeed, who read merely for entertainment, or the passing of an idle hour, the life of a lowly servant of Christ possesses no interest. It is true they may survey with wonder the career of a Williams, and be excited to admiration by *his* heroic endurance of hardship and exposure to danger, in the cause of the Redeemer ; but

A

the progress of a retired pastor, whose efforts to promote the interests of religion, are, (so far as personal ministry is concerned) confined to a more limited sphere, is to them a matter of indifference.

It is not thus, however, with the christian, who is truly concerned for the extension of the spiritual kingdom of Jesus Christ. With ardent desire for the advancement of that kingdom, he regards with lively interest, not only the self-sacrificing career of the devoted missionary, but also that of the less conspicuous preacher of the cross, who, though he has not been chosen to carry the glad news of salvation across the mighty deep, is nevertheless working in God's appointed way, for the furtherance of the same glorious end.

By such readers, the following humble attempt to embalm the memory of one who thus laboured in word and doctrine, will, it is hoped, be perused with feelings of kindness and interest.

The late Rev. JOHN EAGLETON was born at Coventry, October 31st, 1785. His father

was a ribbon manufacturer, and was also much respected and beloved as a Local Preacher in the Methodist Connexion; and both parents were eminent for piety and devotedness to the cause of God. Of them it might truly be said, “they were poor in this world, but rich in faith.” They were deeply imbued with veneration for the name, character, and unwearied labours of the Rev. John Wesley; and thus from earliest infancy their son was accustomed to the doctrines inculcated by that popular body of professing christians, the Wesleyan Methodists. He was truly an Arminian by education, and even at the early age of ten years, evinced much solicitous partiality for his father’s creed. Child-like, he revered his amiable paternal instructor as an infallible oracle; and the words of his mouth were regarded by the lad, not as the words of a man, but as those of a god.

The many enquiries which an inquisitive disposition prompted him to make, awakened in the bosom of his father an anxious concern to establish and rivet the mind of his promising

son, in the fundamental doctrines of the Wesleyan faith. The task was by no means difficult. The little fellow heard with attention, and treasured up the instructions he received.

The manner in which the revered and beloved father imparted such instructions must have been peculiarly happy, combining the tenderness of a parent with the authority of a teacher. It is thus described by Mr. Eagleton: "A degree of dictatorial authority, softened by the familiarity of a friend, characterised the manner of my father, when engaged in pouring instruction into my youthful mind. On these occasions, my eye, my ear, and my heart, were all secured; and it became my predominant desire to be in all things conformed to the man whom I was proud to call father." His father's character and sentiments were in his opinion the very climax of human perfection; and he determined that he would at least resemble him in one point—he would be a *preacher*. Many were the attempts he made to enact the style and manner in which his beloved father was wont in his public min-

istrations to exhibit the terrors of the law or the wonders of the cross. "Often," says he, "did I exercise my oratorical powers in the field, with the objects of inanimate nature alone for my silent auditors. Sometimes I affected to soar even above my model, and forsaking my dear father's humble style, to vie with the more studied oratory of the clergy. Attiring myself as nearly as possible, in the clerical fashion; with the parlour for my church, the two-armed chair for my pulpit, and the wide-opened folio bible before me, I lectured the furniture that surrounded me on the terrors of death, the solemnities of judgment, and the prospects of eternity."

To these early predilections in favour of the ministry memory often recurred in after life, and frequently in the sweet seasons of domestic intercourse did the *real* pulpit orator refer with a smile of remembrance to the hours of childhood thus spent in aiming at the enactment of the ministerial character. That this determination was not merely a boyish fancy events have proved; for never, in all the

changes through which he passed, from the period to which reference is here made, up to the time when he engaged in the work upon which his heart was set, did the desire for that work wholly forsake him. And for this work, to which by providence he was called, he was by nature eminently fitted. He was much indebted to the possession of a remarkably enquiring mind ; and by every possible means, during the years of boyhood, did he acquire knowledge and gain information. Books were to him a source of the richest enjoyment, and no sacrifice of childish gratification was considered too great, if by its means he could make an addition to his own little library. How thankful would the subject of this memoir have been, to possess opportunities of a free access to books, such as are enjoyed by young people of the present day ! His father's means not allowing him to make the purchases he desired in this way, he embraced every occasion of borrowing these treasures of wisdom ; and often, when unable to obtain some wished for volume, his silent abstraction for

hours together evinced the sadness of his heart.

The conversation of pious men also, was to him a continual feast; and often would he apply to such among his father's friends, as might be considered more erudite than he, for the resolution of difficulties, and the explanation of subjects which to his still childish mind were wrapped in mystery, or invested with wonder.

It may not be irrelevant here to notice, his rapid progress in such knowledge as could be gained, at the day-schools in which his father was enabled to place him. There he soon outstripped each competitor of his age, and in some branches of a common education, "grew wiser than his teachers." This, perhaps, might be attributed, not so much to superior talent, or quickness of perception, as to his unwearied perseverance, a quality of mind, for which throughout his whole life he was eminently distinguished.

No difficulty appeared too great for his energetic mind to overcome, and such was his intense application, even at this early age, that

the usual sports and recreations of school-boys had few charms for him ; and during the hours in which his companions were engaged in play, he might still be found conning a new lesson or gleaning fresh instruction from some oft-read page. He was at this time an attendant at the sabbath-school, with which excellent institution some of his earliest and best affections were entwined. There he loved to place himself as a humble scholar in the class of some sincere and pious teacher, to whose explanations of the sacred scriptures he listened with attention and delight. There was no school connected with his father's little congregation ; he therefore availed himself of the privilege of attending one belonging to the Rev. Geo. Burder's chapel. That school was blessed with some devoted labourers in this important field. There was one teacher, an aged but eminently pious servant of Christ, so well qualified by divine grace for the discharge of his interesting duties, that while conspicuous for the holiness of his life and character, he won the affections of his youth.

ful charge, by the tenderness and simplicity of his manners and exhortations.

To this good old man Mr. E. was ardently attached, and many years after the precious seed was sown, did he refer to that aged teacher as the instrument in God's hand of much good to his soul. During the period of childhood, his mind was often impressed with the value of his soul, and the importance of preparation for eternity.

"At a very early period of my life," he says, "I frequently felt a serious concern about my soul. From the age of about five to ten or eleven, eternity was often the subject of my meditations, and death—the passage to a future state—was often exhibited to my view. Under such gloomy feelings, I frequently retired to weep alone. The day of judgment appeared a most tremendous period indeed, and the thought that *I* must be there, mournfully impressed my young mind. Most terrifying dreams were usually my night visitors, some of which, I shall never forget. The sermons and exhortations I heard from

my father and others, frequently affected me for several days. These and providential occurrences, such as deaths, wars, and earthquakes, made me seriously concerned about eternity, and often to wish I were a good child." Here it may be observed, that although he did not date an actual change of heart until a more advanced period of his life, he yet considered the various states of mind through which he passed, from the first dawn of reason, as so many links in that chain of providence and grace which ultimately led to his conversion; and he looked upon all as preparatory to that gracious change.

Such were his pursuits and feelings up to the age of twelve, when he was obliged to leave the home of his father in order to become acquainted with some branch of trade as a means of subsistence. Of this event he thus speaks: "The day at length arrived, when that providence which overrules all mortal things, required me to quit my father's house, and my native city. I was not however conducted to a situation suited to mental pursuits,

or adapted to foster the principles of religion, which had been deposited in my mind. No far-famed academy in the three-fold kingdom of George the third, bade me welcome to its diversified privileges; and silver or gold I had none wherewith to purchase a name or a place among the sons of the prophets.

“ Far otherwise was my condition : eight years’ servitude was assigned me, that I might earn my bread by the sweat of my brow ; and I was placed in the midst of associates, with whom indeed I might easily learn to grovel and descend, but could not rationally be expected to rise either in moral or religious excellence.” It was not, however, in a repining spirit that he thus in after life referred to the society with which he had to mingle in his youth. Although apparently unfavourable to the growth of every thing good in his mind, the circumstances that then surrounded him, were connected with the most important results. The hand of God was with him there, restraining from evil, and guarding from danger, when that hand was unacknowledged by the

object of its care : and it was there, as will be seen, that his best impressions were revived and deepened, and his character for time and eternity was stamped.

Nor let it be inferred, from the above quotation from his own remarks, that his father was indifferent to the moral and spiritual interests of his son, in selecting a situation for him. The master to whom he bound him was a professor of religion, and was connected with the same denomination as himself ; so that he doubtless entertained the hope, that under the roof of such a person, his child might still receive that attention in the best things which it had been his study to bestow. But the name only not the power of religion was acknowledged in the family of which he became an inmate. According therefore to the rules of the household, every apprentice was obliged to attend regularly the ministry of the word ; so far all was well. But there the form of godliness ceased ; no family altar was reared ; no lifting up of the voice of prayer and praise was heard ; and the weeks passed

round in a mere attention to business, and a participation in such amusements as the evenings could afford. The house was almost destitute of books, and the means of obtaining them were most difficult of access; so that, lacking these sources of improvement, and daily associating with careless and dissipated companions, it is not surprising, that for a time, new subjects engrossed his attention and thoughts. Dispositions which till then, had lain dormant, were excited to energy; and resulted in an indefinite course of life, which, though not amounting to open vice or immorality, was yet, as he afterwards felt, the characteristic of the carnal mind which is enmity against God. He was not however so indeterminate as to be destitute of an object of pursuit: his mind was so constituted that he could not rest satisfied, without some special end at which to aim; he therefore turned his attention to vocal and instrumental music, connecting himself with the choir at the chapel. His talent for music was decided, and he quickly learned to play on several wind and stringed instruments.

In a few weeks, he acquired sufficient skill to perform in public, and at fifteen years of age, was elected master of the choir. In this capacity temptations beset him, and pleasures allured, whose effects, in many a promising youth, have been the utter subversion of morals, and degradation of character; and it was ever with the liveliest gratitude that he looked back on the perilous position in which he then stood, ascribing it to the sovereign mercy of God, that he was preserved from falling into the depths of depravity and vice. But although restrained from outward and grosser sins, a total estrangement of heart, from the things of God, and the pleasures of religion, was the result of yielding his mind to the circumstances which surrounded him. The darkness and indifference which ensued, are thus described by him in the review of this season of peril. “ Whilst on this enchanted ground, preserved by the guardian care of heaven, I acknowledged it not:—estranged from God, indifferent to His word; without hope, without prayer,—I arrived at a fearful distance from Him.”

During the period of his residence in his master's family, they had removed to Walsall; and this was regarded by the apprentices as a pleasing circumstance, in the hope that there they might enjoy more liberty, and a greater diversity of amusements. And so it was. Even the restraint of the sabbath was done away, and they were allowed to frequent what places of worship they chose. Here for a time Mr. E. attended, with tolerable regularity, the preaching of the Rev. Mr. Grove; but at length even this form was cast aside, and choosing for his companions the immoral and profane, he preferred ranging the fields with them, to the worship of God, or the privileges of His house. From this course of conduct he was suddenly laid aside by severe illness, which proved to be fever in the brain, attended by violent delirium, with the usual symptoms of that distressing complaint. His restoration however was speedy, but the effects, in his own words, were "only base ingratitude, and a state of still deeper insensibility, and rebellion against God." But the hand of God was

again laid upon him, in a second affliction, which was heightened by the consciousness that it was the direct consequence of his sin. The theatre he had never been allowed to attend, on any occasion, and so loudly did conscience testify against it, that hitherto he had never ventured within its unhallowed precincts. Persuaded however by one of his companions, and stilling the voice of conscience, or disregarding its denunciations, he one evening determined for once to brave the scene of danger. Proceeding up the stairs to the gallery of the house, he stumbled and fell with great force against a step, thus producing a severe wound in the leg. In great alarm, he hastily left the place of temptation and peril ; nor did he ever attempt to repeat his visit. With reference to this event he observes, "the pain from the wound was so acute, and the contusion so dangerous, that I thought I must die, and through fear I began to pray, (for alas I had thrown aside even the form of devotion!) but knew not how to pray or what to pray for. I feared damnation, and cried to be delivered

from my affliction, resolving if spared to lead a new life. But when in mercy restored, I again forgot to pray ; yet my mind was so far impressed, that I did not return to my former associations of immorality and profaneness."

Through divine mercy, this period of spiritual darkness and death was not of long duration ; the scene began to change, the spell was broken, and his most intimate companion among the few young men with whom he now associated, was the instrument, in God's hand, of rousing him from the lethargy which had fallen upon his soul. "In the midst of this career of sin and folly," he says, "my friend D—— became serious : in other words he was awakened to a sense of his sinfulness, saw the danger he was in, and began to seek the way of salvation." "A genuine solicitude" he observes, "to escape perdition, and find the way to heaven, is always accompanied by evangelical benevolence to others. Benevolence proceeds from its centre in circles, like the vibrations of the air in sound, or those of the water produced by casting a stone therein ;

first circling the nearest, and gradually extending to the whole.

“ Such was the benevolence of my friend D——. His first thoughts, next to his own salvation, were for me ; and his most ardent desire, was, to have for a companion in the ways of religion, the one who had been most closely connected with him, in the frivolities of youth, and the bonds of earthly friendship. He could not however open his mind to me, in familiar discourse, by reason of that shameful shame, which often pervades the bosom of one who has just entered upon a religious course. The holy fire will nevertheless continue to burn, and must find some way of escape. If it impel not to speak with the tongue, it will animate the pen ; and form the scribe, if the orator be silent.”

And such *was* the effect which personal religion had upon D——. It inspired him with a determination, though reserve sealed his lips from *conversing* on the important theme, to *write* to his friend. Accordingly, an anonymous letter was directed for Mr. E.

to be left at his master's house. On opening it, he found to his surprise that there was no signature affixed. The contents were as follows :—

“ My dear Friend,”

“ For some weeks past, my thoughts have been much engaged with the all-important concerns of eternity. I am deeply concerned to know the way that leads to everlasting life ; being fully persuaded that it would have been better for me never to have been born, than to die without an interest in Jesus. By the ministry of the word, to which I have recently attended with increasing avidity, the eyes of my understanding have been opened, and I see myself as a guilty, ruined, helpless sinner. Like a hammer, in the hand of one, who knows both when, and how to strike, the word of God, delivered by his faithful servants, breaks my hard and stony heart to pieces.

“ Amidst this blaze of light, wonders of depravity, and wonders of grace, rise up to my astonished view ; and under this mighty energy, I feel compunction for sin, and shame

at the remembrance of all my transgressions. I read, I pray, I meditate, I fear, I tremble, I mourn. I have no sense of sin forgiven, I have no witness within that I am a child of God ;—death is the king of terrors ; judgment is the seal of destinies, and eternity! eternity! —I cannot utter the feelings awakened by the thoughts of eternity! Oh my friend and companion, will you seek the Lord with me ? shall we enquire the way to Zion *together* ? and direct our eyes to lasting and substantial bliss ? Your case is similar to mine ; you need, as much as I, an interest in the Saviour's blood : there is no other name under heaven, given among men, whereby we can be saved, but the name of the Lord Jesus Christ !

“ Ponder these things in your mind for a few days ; make them the matter of fervent prayer, at least three times a day. From a child, you have known, as well as most people, that these things are our chief concern. Our parents have instructed us, have prayed for, and with us a thousand times ; but hitherto, they fear in vain. Oh let us go to heaven

together, that we may gladden their hearts in this world, and in the world to come, unite with them, in ascribing salvation to God and the Lamb!" "I am,

Your affectionate Friend."

The effect of this salutary epistle was immediate and deep; and this apparently feeble instrument, was, in God's hand rendered mighty.—Entering the strong holds of a rebellious and hardened heart, it was the means of arousing slumbering convictions, and melting the frozen springs of feeling; and by its touching reference to parental love and solicitude, struck a chord in the breast of him to whom it was addressed, which vibrated to his inmost soul. All that day and most of the succeeding one, his awakened mind revolved the important themes suggested by the letter. The next day he who had long forgotten to say his prayers, began in earnest to call on the name of the God of his father. Several circumstances conspired at the same time to promote a great revolution in his mind and character. His master had attained considerable elevation

in society, and in consequence was treated with greater deference in the Methodist Connexion, of which, as before stated, he was a member. A new arrangement of the circuit required the residence of one of the travelling preachers in Walsall; but it being found necessary to delay furnishing a preacher's house for a time, accommodations were provided in the family of Mr. E.'s master. A change soon appeared in the household; family devotion was introduced; a word of advice was frequently given by the preachers to the apprentices; books became part of the furniture of the house, and the use of them was freely allowed. One of the preachers, from respect to Mr. E.'s father, with whom he had been acquainted many years, conceived a partiality for the son, and watched over him with parental care. The youth in return revered him as a second father, and attended his preaching, which was highly experimental with much profit, and derived from it great edification. By these means, overruled by the gracious power of God, the impressions

made upon his mind were strengthened and deepened day by day ; and through divine mercy those impressions issued in the surrender of himself as a helpless, guilty sinner into the hands of that God as a merciful Redeemer.

He had now attained his sixteenth year, and from this period he dates that change of heart and regeneration of soul, which must pass upon every son of Adam, before he can be truly devoted to the service and glory of God. But this part of his history will be rendered more interesting, by transcribing his own brief account of the dealings of God with his soul, and some of the various exercises of mind through which he passed.

“ Discovering all was not right, I began to hear the gospel *for myself*. Public worship I habitually attended, religious books I frequently read, and becoming better acquainted with my bible, my concern was thereby increased. Clearer discoveries of sinfulness, helplessness, and need of a Saviour, led me to pray as I had never prayed before for pardoning mercy and acceptance in the beloved.

“ Abounding more in these exercises my burden became heavier, till at length, it was with difficulty I attended to my daily employment. I was often constrained to leave my work, and retire into some solitary place to pour out my heart before the Lord, and seek the revelation of his love. Sometimes I thought it fruitless toil:—that God would never shew *me* any mercy.—Yet again hope cheered my mind, and I was encouraged to persevere. In this state I had continued about four months, when in private prayer I experienced that sweet relief from a burdened conscience, which can be effected only by the power of the Spirit of God. I was enabled to realize Jesus as dying for helpless guilty man, and to hope he died for *me*; and so full was I of inexpressible satisfaction, that unable to contain my joy, I went down stairs, and told what the Lord had done for my soul.”

Such is the account given by him of his own conversion; and taking the test supplied by our Saviour, “ by their fruits ye shall know them,” we sorrow not for his removal,

as those who are without hope, but have good cause to believe, that the change was truly wrought, by the influence of the Spirit of God ; and that the vicissitudes of his life,—the mercies he enjoyed, and the afflictions he suffered, worked together for his good, and tended to make him meet for the inheritance of the saints in light.

He soon discovered who was the author of the anonymous letter, which was the first means of arousing him to a sense of his condition ; and the pleasure with which he and his friend D——now walked together in the ways of religion, may be readily conceived. He did not fail to acquaint his parents with the happy change which had occurred in the son for whom they had long and anxiously prayed. The following is a transcript of the letter he wrote to them on the occasion :—

“ My dear and honoured Parents,”

“ With unspeakable pleasure I take up my pen to record the loving kindness of the Lord, and to tell you what he has done. Some few months ago, Mr. —— who knows you

well, was appointed by the conference to this circuit, in which it seems God had called him to do a great work. The people flock to hear him in every place, and several hundreds have been brought to the knowledge of Christ. Even here, the Lord is doing great things, and a crowd of young persons seem to be in earnest for salvation. Among the rest, the Lord I trust, has visited *my* soul. My chief companion, being awakened himself, was the instrument of awakening me, from the sleep of sin. Divine light has dispelled the darkness of my mind, and I now as in the blaze of day, see the evil of sin, the worth of my soul, the value of the Saviour; and am daily crying for pardon and salvation, through the blood of the Lamb.

“About thirty among us are animated by the same feelings. We meet on the Lord’s day morning, at five o’clock, for prayer and praise, and six or seven engage in prayer, and conclude a few minutes after six. Some weep in the anguish of their spirits, others are joyful in the salvation of the Lord. We then

attend the general meeting for prayer at seven o'clock, and after the three services at chapel, we hold a prayer-meeting in some part of the town. On the week days we have two or three meetings for prayer at five in the morning, and as many at seven at night, besides our class-meeting and our preaching night.

“Oh my dear parents you have long prayed for me, and now I hope your prayers are answered in some good measure. But I still need them ; and (adored be His holy name who gives me every good I have !) I now feel my need of an interest in your supplications.

“Oh ! pray for me, that I may not be deceived ! Pray for me that I may not fall away ! Pray that I may see more of the evil of sin ; pray that I may know my interest in the precious blood of Christ ; pray, my dear parents, still pray that I may be saved with a present and everlasting salvation.

“I am, beloved parents,
Your once thoughtless but now I trust
renewed son.”

To conceive the heartfelt gratitude and delight of the pious parents, on the receipt of this letter is impossible. Mr. E. thus endeavours to describe the effect:—“ On receiving the letter my dear father sat down, saying,—‘ It is from John ; I suppose he wants clothes or money or a week’s holiday.

“ He opened the letter—he began to read—the tear started—utterance was choked—his eyes failed with weeping. Again he attempted to read, and was again overcome. At that moment my mother entered the room, and amazed to see her husband in tears, tenderly enquired the cause of his grief, and if any harm had befallen *me*, conjecturing even my death in the agitation of the moment. With another flood of tears he placed the letter in her hand. She read—she wept: ‘ oh,’ she exclaimed, ‘ he is not indeed dead, he is alive unto God ! Did I not tell you the Lord would hear our petitions, and now you see we have not prayed in vain !’

“ ‘ And now,’ said my father, ‘ let us present our united praises to God ;’ and with

streaming eyes they knelt at the footstool of divine mercy, giving glory to God for his great goodness, and imploring his benediction on the head of their converted son.

“ To every relative and friend who called upon them, the joyful news was communicated in cheerful strains.

“ The next Sunday morning my venerable father chose for his text, ‘ Praise ye the Lord,’ and with more than usual animation thus addressed the flock : ‘ My brethren, never since God set my own soul at liberty have I had so much reason to praise him, as I have at this happy time. My fears for my dear son are removed ; my prayers on his behalf, in many of which you have united, are graciously answered, and now my poor John is panting after full salvation. But you shall hear his own testimony.’

“ While he read my humble epistle, every eye was fixed. Some wept for joy ; some wept tears of anguish for their own children ; but every one seemed to give expression to the sentiment of the text, ‘ Praise ye the Lord.’

“On the following day, my rejoicing and affectionate father devoted an hour to his pen, and wrote me the following epistle :—

“My dear John,”

“Your letter last week, was to your mother and myself, the joy and rejoicing of our hearts ; a feast of fat things, of wines well refined, yea, a feast of love divine. We have not ceased to give thanks to God on your behalf, nor failed to remember you in our prayers ; but night and day, we pour out our hearts before the Lord in supplication with all gratitude. My solicitudes however, are not lessened by your conversion to God, though the nature of them is changed ; indeed I think on the whole, I feel more now, than I did before. *Then* I was anxious for your conversion ; *now*, for your perseverance : and more anxious for your perseverance now, than I was before for your conversion. It could not indeed be otherwise, unless I believed the horrible doctrines of the high Calvinists, who teach young Christians to believe, that they who are *once* in Christ, are *always* in Christ. My belief on this subject is, that he who is a child of God to-day.

may be a child of the devil to-morrow ; even as he who was a child of the devil yesterday, is a child of God to-day. And know my dear lad, that this is not only possible, but even probable, till you have obtained the second blessing, which I beseech you to seek with all your heart, as the best means I know of preserving you from apostacy. For oh, should you ever turn back into the world, should you sin wilfully, after receiving the knowledge of the truth, and crucify to yourself the Son of God afresh, you will become seven-fold more the child of hell than before. While therefore I promise to pray for you with all the affectionate concern of a father, I trust you will suffer from me the word of exhortation, and what Jesus said to his disciples, I say unto thee my son in his name—WATCH.

“ My dear lad, remember that there are many things that you must watch *against* ; many that you must watch *for* ; and some that you must watch *over*. You must watch against the world ; its maxims, its pleasures, and its spirit. Against Satan ; his deceits, his temptations, and his wiles. You must watch against for-

mality, hypocrisy, pride, vanity, and every evil that would separate you from your God.

“ You must watch *for* opportunities of *getting* good ; by reading, by meditation, by prayer ; by converse and by observance of the means of grace. You must watch for opportunities of *doing* good ; by warning sinners, by visiting the sick, by living a holy, heavenly, and spiritual life. You must watch also for *providential* opportunities of doing good ; and take care to improve the golden moments as they fly.

“ But there are moreover some things that you must watch *over* ; and vain will your other watchings be, if you are not vigilant here. Watch over your own deceitful heart, watch over your unruly tongue ; over your sentiments, over your passions, your desires, your words, and your actions, I beseech you to *watch*. My heart overflows, my eyes weep anew—I can write no more. Write to me soon, and till then my dear John, remember at the throne of grace

Your affectionate Father.”

The above letter has been inserted not only for the excellent and important admonitions it contains, but also that an impartial view might be given of the strenuous manner in which Arminian sentiments were enforced upon Mr. E.'s mind. And in tracing the gradual change which took place in his opinions respecting some of the doctrines of christianity, the aim of the writer will be to place before the reader a simple account of that change, without unkind or invidious reference to any denomination of christians.

About six months after the receipt of the letter from his friend D——, Mr. Eagleton began to entertain thoughts of preaching the word of God to his fellow sinners. On this subject he opened his mind to his friend, who also felt some desire to enter upon that important work, and they agreed to meet each other at an early hour in the morning, several times a week, that they might read and pray together, and assist each other in the work of preparation.

Mr. E. soon discovered that his friend had

enjoyed the advantages of a better education than himself, and that it was necessary for him to acquire if possible a little more learning. First of all however he determined to store his mind more abundantly with the contents of that volume, the perusal of which now afforded him unspeakable pleasure. Impatient to proclaim the way of life to dying men, he imagined, not incorrectly, that a more thorough knowledge of his bible would of itself fit and enable him to commence the work after which he so ardently aspired. Accordingly he applied himself with renewed energy to the study of the scriptures, and on Lord's day, Oct. 31, 1802, the day on which he attained his seventeenth year, he appeared in public to preach the first time, and chose for his text, John iii. 7, "Ye must be born again." Many of his hearers supposed he had been guided in the choice of his text from the circumstance of preaching his first sermon on his birth-day, but such was not the fact. Absorbed in more important affairs, he was utterly unconscious of the coincidence for some time after.

The subject of his text appeared to him of incomparable moment. He knew he had undergone an amazing change himself, and hoped it was that of the new birth; the nature and necessity of which he endeavoured to illustrate and enforce. In developing the nature of that change which the Redeemer calls being “born again,” he attempted to shew, that man by his natural birth is introduced into a state of sin and death; by the second birth, into a state of holiness and life; and that the second birth is analogous to the first; that by the first birth we are made partakers of the human nature, and by the second of a divine nature. His sermon was well received;—they said “he is a wonderful youth.” His fame was noised abroad, and other congregations in the circuit wished him to visit them. His boyish appearance, warm passions, and a fine sonorous voice, united to make him popular. This popularity awakened the concern not only of the local preachers, but, of the circuit preachers too. He had thus far proceeded without submitting himself to their ex-

amination, according to the views and constitution of the people with whom he was connected ; not from a principle of insubordination, but from the dictates of a reserved and modest disposition, which suffered him not to become a candidate for the ministry, by an open profession of a call to the sacred work. The preachers, however, resolved that he should no longer proceed, without passing through the fiery ordeal ; he was therefore summoned before the superintendent, who was no other than Mr.— the preacher who had resided in his master's house, and whom he had ever regarded with respect and reverence. With trembling steps, the young preacher entered into the presence of his superior, and stood before him, with eyes fixed upon the ground. " Well John," said the superintendent, in an angry tone, " I hear you have been *preaching* at different places in the circuit,—is it true? " " I have been trying to preach" replied the agitated youth. " Why," said the minister, " you are the most unlikely lad I ever knew to think of attempting to to preach ; pray how did the thought get into

your head?" The youthful aspirant, abashed and confounded, could only reply that he wished to do good to his fellow-creatures, and therefore after much prayer and meditation, he had determined to make the attempt. "Well," said Mr. —, "I know not whether God has sent you, or you have sent yourself; indeed it may be the devil has sent you: however you are appointed to preach for me, and *before* me, to the great congregation at the head of the circuit next Sunday morning."

Full of anguish the youth departed and returned to his employment. Days of anxiety and nights of distress brought the sabbath morn; and with highly excited feelings he set out for the chapel. It was several miles distant, and during his walk thither many and diversified were the thoughts that thronged his mind. Hope and fear, joy and sorrow, alternately possessed his heart. But the thought that he had a glorious message to deliver, and that He who first gave the record of eternal life, had promised to be with those who proclaim it, even to the end of the world, ani-

mated his zeal, and inspired his mind with confidence in the anticipation of his arduous task.

At the sight of the chapel he turned pale ; his fears increased,—and as he afterwards observed, his knees literally smote one against another from the commencement to the termination of the service.

Much fault was found with the sermon by those who sat in judgment, and many blunders were adverted to; while the laws of syntax were said to have been violated some hundreds of times. Mr. E. was however admitted on the local preachers' plan, and went forth with a regular authority. But it was not deemed sufficient by him to bear his credentials, or to witness the general expression of approbation with which the people favoured him ; and he resolved to profit by the complaints which were made of his trial sermon. He accordingly applied to a learned minister of the Unitarian denomination, who was also master of a considerable school, for a course of instruction in the elements of lan-

guages. After acquainting himself more perfectly with English grammar, he applied himself with much success to Latin and Greek, and soon left his judges behind in these matters. He afterwards attained some eminence as a Hebrew scholar, the study of that language, being to him, a source of the greatest pleasure.

One of Mr. Eagleton's first efforts, after his public entrance upon the work of preaching, was to prove the folly and error (as he then conceived) of the calvinistic system. Carefully had his mind been shielded from what his father considered such "horrible doctrines;" but certainly the course pursued by that good man, was not adapted to secure the end at which he aimed. He never suffered his son fairly to look into the subject; or candidly and impartially to try it by the word of God. The favourite side of the question only was presented before him; and thus when he was led at length to examine for himself the views he had been taught to regard with abhorrence, the arguments maintained by the supporters of those views, received additional weight

from the freshness and novelty of their aspect. Indeed, his very want of information respecting the opinions he denounced, caused his criticisms and remarks to lose much of their force upon the minds of his hearers. His subsequent opinion of his attempts to wield the sword of argument, and of the manner in which he succeeded, is given in the following extract :—

“ Thus honoured with what I thought a regular and scriptural call to the ministry, and possessed of sufficient information to correct the grosser blunders of discourse, I began to declaim with much confidence. Restricted in my reading to the volumes published by Mr. Wesley, and the controversial writings of Mr. Fletcher, I glowed with indignation against the calvinistic creed, and never lost an opportunity to shew it. Ignorant of the views of those whom I opposed, or viewing their tenets through no other medium, than the writings of the above named venerable men: and withal, colouring those distorted pictures with the notions of gloom and horror which I pre-

sumed naturally belonged to them, I was more than astonished that any rational beings could hold with (so termed) ‘damnable heresies,’ and believed nothing more was necessary than a faithful exposure of the system to induce all its votaries to fall before the methodist scheme.

“ I determined therefore to do my part, and up and down the circuit, I preached and thundered against the calvinists. Crowds of graceless zealots thronged around me, and numbers from mere curiosity came to hear what ‘this lad’ had to say about the deep things of God.

“ But whilst I most certainly imagined I was rooting the errors of Calvinism out of the earth ; the judicious of both parties thought from the manner in which I managed the argument, that I should soon become a Calvinist myself.”

And so indeed it proved : though never a bigot in any of his opinions, Mr. E. became warmly attached to what was considered high doctrine, by the denomination with which he was then connected. The change was gradual but certain ; and to the latest period of his life, he

retained the views which after the most impartial scrutiny and examination, he embraced about this period of his history. It was his privilege to form an intimate acquaintance with several talented ministers of the Independent denomination. Among others, the Rev. Mr. Grove of Walsall became in a great measure his counsellor and guide. Deeply interested in the welfare of the youthful preacher, he formed an attachment for him equal to that of a tender parent, and intercourse the most delightful and beneficial was the result. Conversation with this beloved friend, together with the reading of books which had hitherto been to him as “sealed fountains,” were the means of strengthening his now calvinistic views of the gospel ; and though he continued to preach with the greatest acceptance in the circuit where he commenced, it was quite evident that the prophecies of his “judicious” hearers were receiving their accomplishment.

While thus engaged in preaching, studying, reading, and various other duties, he continued

punctual in his attention to business, and while his popularity as a preacher daily increased; his submission to his earthly master and his diligence in his calling, proved his religion to be not that of the head merely, but shewed that it had its throne in the heart, and ruled every action of his life. His popularity excited the envy of some ill-disposed persons. They declared that it was presumption in one so young to occupy the pulpit, and proclaim the news of salvation. Astonished at his abundant labours, and believing it impossible that while thus ‘fervent in spirit,’ he could be also ‘diligent in business,’ they waited upon his employer in the hope of hearing something to his disadvantage; but from the concurrent testimony of his master and fellow-workmen, they learnt that his industry was remarkable, and that he neglected no duty devolving upon him. Such, indeed, was the character he maintained during the whole of his irksome and painful servitude. Every spare moment was occupied by books, study, or conversation with his best friends; and it was often observ-

ed that, even when his hands were busy at work, his mind was also engaged with some interesting page, from a book which he had placed before him. Thankful indeed he was that the nature of his employment permitted this alleviation, being that of plaiting whip-thongs, which after some practice may be done almost mechanically.

Many were the hardships and privations he experienced during his long apprenticeship ; and he gladly hailed the day which freed him from its galling bonds, and left him at liberty to prosecute the career marked out by his ardent and devoted spirit.

At the expiration of his apprenticeship, being twenty years of age, he removed to Birmingham, where he resided several months, preaching in the adjacent villages, and occasionally enjoying the ministrations of various eminent preachers in that town. There he was greatly strengthened both in body and mind, and experienced such vigour and enjoyment in the christian course, as often caused him to confirm the testimony of inspiration :—

“They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint.”

He had occasionally before he left Walsall visited his father’s congregation, and being now at perfect liberty he accepted their invitation to spend a few Sabbaths amongst them.

His still juvenile appearance, and extraordinary manner, greatly interested the people; their attention was arrested, and their hearts became fixed upon him. His father, advanced in life, and not unwilling to resign his public labours, which were almost as regular as those of the circuit preachers, gave his sanction, and a unanimous call was given to the son, to preach among them the unsearchable riches of Christ. The little church and congregation which his father had gathered, met in a large room capable of containing about three hundred persons. Though adhering to the Wesleyan forms and creed, they were, it should seem, unconnected with any circuit, and were therefore at liberty to choose their own minister.

Mr. Eagleton's calvinistic views of divine truth, were by this time greatly matured, and his determination was, if possible, to remodel his father's church, and establish it upon the independent principle. He wished, however, gradually to lead the people into his views, and so carefully did he handle the word of God, with constant meditation and fervent prayer, and so great was the good wrought, by the blessing of God on his instrumentality, that his object was soon attained; and he had the inexpressible pleasure to find himself minister of an independent church and congregation, in the very place where his honoured father had so long laboured in word and doctrine.

Such was the responsibility resting upon him, before he had attained his twenty-first year.

His parents themselves became partially conformed to his views, so far, at least, as to hold delightful communion with the church as it was modified by him; his father occasionally occupying his pulpit when he was called to supply elsewhere.

About this time Mr. E. entered upon the marriage relation; this event occurring in 1807. The place in which he now stately laboured, was soon too strait for the rapidly increasing congregation. Much good was effected through the faithful preaching of the cross; and so great was the zeal of the people, that, though poor, they decided upon building a new chapel, which was erected in Gosford-street, and made equal to the accommodation of about seven hundred people. This place was soon filled, and the most encouraging success still attended the ministry of the young pastor. His ordination took place in 1809, when a number of respectable ministers engaged in the service. His beloved friend, Mr. Grove, gave the charge; and the relation of his own experience was rendered doubly interesting to the people, by the reference it contained to the days of his childhood which were spent among them. His confession of faith, embodied in the replies given by him to the usual questions, was as follows:—

“ A more incontrovertible point cannot, I

presume, be admitted, than that which is so universally acknowledged, viz.—there is no effect without a cause. The admission of this, must, I conceive, lead every rational, unprejudiced, and thinking mind, to a conviction of the equally evident truth, that there is a supreme cause of all things—God. The existence of innumerable worlds, is, to me, an invincible argument, for the reality of a divine author, who is infinite, eternal, and unchangeable in his perfections.

“The scriptures of the old and new testaments appear to me to form a complete and infallible revelation of the mind of God to man. The majesty of the style, the blessed tendency of the doctrines, the harmony of the parts; the fulfilment of their prophecies—their mighty efficacy upon the lives of men; the wonderful preservation of the sacred volume, and its present superiority to all opposition—testify to me that it is from God, and that it constitutes the only test of faith and rule of practice. From the holy volume I learn that the Lord is one Lord, beside whom

there is no God. I am at the same time taught to believe in three divine persons who are co-equal, co-essential, and co-eternal ; Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. The inconceivable perfection of the triune Lord, and the manifest imperfection of man render very probable the idea of God being the Governor of the world ; but the Bible indubitably declares what is thus made likely ; and *I* find no difficulty in subscribing most heartily to the announcement, 'He worketh all things according to the counsel of his own will.' In the mystery of providence, by the light of revelation, I behold Jesus, 'the Word,' creating all things out of nothing, and pronouncing each part very good. At length the most noble work of God is formed, to complete the stupendous undertaking, and all is pronounced very good. For man was made in the likeness of God, holy and happy—though he is far from being so now. Facts the most evident demonstrate man to have become sinful and miserable. Sin and iniquity abound, and the calamities of this life are innumerable.

The account given in the scriptures of this strange contrast I consider reasonable, and firmly believe. There I learn that God entered into covenant with his creature man ; proposing a condition of perfect obedience to His law, in every point commensurate with his nature, to confirm him and his posterity in the felicity of paradise—and determined to pour forth all the curses included in that dreadful sentence, ‘Thou shalt surely die’—on him and his seed should he disobey. As we should have been entitled to the happy effects of obedience, it is just we should be exposed to all the consequences of disobedience, for Adam in his state had freedom of will, and power to use or abuse it. The existence of moral and natural evil evinces that man did not continue in honour, but disobeyed the voice of his sovereign Lord ; and by wilful disobedience, fell from his primeval state of purity and felicity, into a condition of depravity and misery. All his posterity fell in him, and are now incapable of that which is good, having no power of will but to sin against God,

and that continually : and are therefore in danger of his wrath and everlasting damnation. Though God, as a righteous sovereign, might have glorified himself in the utter and eternal death of all his rebellious creatures ; yet, foreseeing sin's entrance into the world, and every consequent evil, he determined to display his infinite mercy and adorable love, in the salvation of sinners the most unworthy. Accordingly he chose of his free favour and undeserved kindness, for the manifestation of discriminating grace, a vast number of the apostate race of Adam, and ordained them to a participation in grace here and glory hereafter.

“ In the accomplishment of salvation, God entered into a covenant of grace : when the Lord Jesus Christ was appointed mediator ; promised to Adam, the Patriarchs, Moses, and the Jews ; and in the fulness of time actually appeared below ; suffered and died as the Saviour of sinners, and ‘ gave his life a ransom for many.’

“ Peculiar honours belong to Jesus in bring-

ing sinners to himself. Effectually called by his Spirit,—justified by his righteousness,—sanctified by the Holy Ghost,—kept by his mighty power unto full salvation ; they will for ever say, ' Blessing and honour to him that sits upon the throne, and to the Lamb for ever !'

' That the revenue of glory may be brought to Jesus our High Priest, means of grace are appointed for the conveyance of spiritual blessings to the children of men. It is man's duty to be found in them, and we may reasonably expect a divine blessing to attend us, in reading the scriptures, preaching, praying, and praising. There are two stated ordinances in the church—Baptism and the Lord's Supper. Baptism is an initiatory ordinance, whereby we are received into the visible church of Christ, and is administered to believers, and their infant seed. The Lord's Supper is observed to keep up a lively recollection of the death and sufferings of Christ ; to intimate our fellowship with him and his members, and to renew our covenant with God ; and there-

fore, as I conceive, to be administered to such only, as give satisfactory evidence of love to God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.

“ For the full display of divine rectitude in all things, God has appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness by Jesus Christ ; when the whole family of man shall surround his bar, and separated, the one from the other, the wicked shall be turned into hell, with all the nations that forget God ; and the righteous shall enter into life eternal : eternity shall close the scene, and God shall be all in all.”

Motives. “ I trust, my dear Sir, that love to souls, a sense of duty, and a desire to glorify God, are the motives with which I entered upon the work of the ministry. An amazing providence has led me here ; since my residence in this place, I have been divinely supported and directed ; the Lord has owned my ministry, and done great things for me, and his people here ; and the consideration of these things makes me fully satisfied, that I am in the place in which God would have me to be.”

Conduct. "Your question, dear Sir, lays me under the obligation of professing myself a christian student and pastor. As a christian I consider it is my duty to devote myself to God by reading, meditation, and private prayer; and to keep up that worship, discipline, and order in my family, which becomes the gospel of Christ; and to strive after a strict observance of my Saviour's golden rule, 'Do unto others, as ye would they should do unto you.' It is my desire and intention, to manage my time to advantage; to study to profit; to collect and improve useful thoughts: and to make all subservient to the great work of instructing men in the things that belong to their eternal peace.

"As a pastor, I engage to preach zealously and faithfully, duly to administer the ordinances; regularly to visit my people, to pray with and for them; to act conscientiously, to enforce discipline in my calling, with a view to the benefit of souls, and the interests of religion."

Such were Mr. Eagleton's views and feelings at the time of his ordination; and except on

two subjects, no material change took place in his mind, during the period of his ministry and his life. Those subjects, as may be surmised, were—The covenant of works, and the second advent of Christ ; and his after views of these doctrines, he regarded less as a change of sentiment, than an accession of new ideas, or as new rays of light emanating from the source of all true light, and giving fresh lustre to the prophecies and announcements of inspiration. But these topics must of necessity be adverted to hereafter. Meantime, in tracing the onward course of one so eminently fitted for the work to which he was called, the pious reader will be led to admire the workings of that God, in whose hand he was but the instrument of good. This truth he was himself ever most ready to acknowledge, and giving all the glory to God, he rejoiced in the language of the great apostle, “ We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of us.”

What, indeed, would there be in the life of

a minister of the gospel, more than that of any other individual, to attract the attention and awaken the interest of the christian, if the specialty of his character as an instrument in God's hand of good to the souls of men were wanting? Of what avail would be the power of natural genius, the splendour of eloquence, or the soundness of argument, to the minister of Christ, who, lacking the blessing which maketh rich, could never be able to exclaim with Paul, "What is our hope or joy or crown of rejoicing? are not even *ye* in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming?"

Thanks be to God, this feature was not wanting in the success which crowned Mr. E.'s arduous exertions. His labours became more abundant, and the blessing of God upon those labour more manifest from day to day; and through his instrumentality, very many were added to the church. In addition to the regular services, he frequently preached in the open air, and on such occasions was most numerously attended; and these out-door

meetings were blessed in an extraordinary manner. His health which had been severely tried by the hardships of his apprenticeship was completely established, and strength of body and of mind, equal to his day, was mercifully vouchsafed.

Many years of peace and usefulness did he anticipate, in the work to which his best energies were devoted: but in the midst of this prosperity, circumstances arose which eventually caused his temporary removal from his attached and beloved people.

The trustees, fearing they should not be able to sustain the burden of the place, gladly agreed to resign the proprietorship of the chapel into the hands of a private person. The individual who took upon himself this responsibility was a gentleman residing about twenty miles from Coventry, who having been long personally attached to Mr. E., was desirous of sitting under his ministry. Possessing ample means for the accomplishment of his wishes, he removed to Coventry in order to attend the chapel, the secular concerns of

which he took entirely upon his own hands.

Unforeseen indeed were the results of this arrangement. The new proprietor of the chapel was a decided Arminian, and soon began to feel uneasy under the Calvinistic sermons of his pastor; and notwithstanding the important work then going on, he came at length to a strange and painful decision, and without assigning any reasons for his conduct, to the astonishment of both minister and people, he abruptly closed the place, and refused to open it again for their admission.

To Mr. E.'s mind, the difference of opinion existing between himself and his friend, was by no means sufficient to account for this proceeding.

Apparently, no bitter feelings had been harboured in the breast of either party, and the affectionate kindness always manifested by the individual towards him had in no degree abated.

Viewing it, therefore, as a dispensation of providence, he met the event with the greatest resignation; blighting as it did, for a sea-

son, the glowing hopes and prospects he had indulged, with regard to the people among whom he laboured. He concluded that his heavenly Master had other work for him to do; and determined to watch with patience for the leadings of his hand. Before a week elapsed he was called to supply at Atherstone. The people he visited being destitute of a pastor, he accepted their invitation to supply, for a few sabbaths, their vacant pulpit; after which, as with one voice, they besought him to take the oversight of them in the Lord. Unwilling to make any permanent engagement, lest an opportunity might present itself of returning to Coventry, he agreed to remain with them two years, during which period he had the unspeakable satisfaction of gathering many into the fold of Christ.

Meantime, the people at Coventry were scattered in every direction, and as they frequently described themselves, "they were as sheep having no shepherd." The house in which they once worshipped was occupied by the Wesleyans, nor could they enter its doors

without sorrowful regrets for the past, and fervent desires for the future. Their daily prayer was, that some path might be opened, by which their beloved pastor might return, and that his voice might be once more heard in the midst of them.

Their prayers were heard. The minister then presiding over the Independent congregation at Vicar Lane chapel, Coventry, resigned the pastoral office ; and so favourable an opportunity was not to be lost. Mr. E.'s former congregation united with the people at Vicar Lane in urging his return ; and a joyful response was given to their request. His pleasure at the prospect of once more settling in his native city, was however in some degree counterbalanced by his own sorrow, and that of the people at Atherstone, at the thought of separation. Their unremitting kindness and attention to himself and family during the season of trial, rendered more distressing by a severe domestic affliction, had greatly endeared them to him, and their reluctance to resign him made the removal a cause of deep

regret to both parties. After fulfilling the term of agreement, Mr. E. once more bent his course to Coventry, and for about seven years laboured in word and doctrine at the chapel in Vicar Lane. It was a source of great consolation to him, when shortly after, the people at Atherstone were supplied with a pious and devoted minister, whose residence among them has proved permanent.

When he had nearly completed the seventh year of his pastorate at Coventry, he was seized with rheumatic fever, which took the form termed by the faculty, 'acute rheumatism,' and so agonizing were his bodily sufferings, that fears the most alarming were entertained by his distressed family and friends. His medical attendants gave little hope of his recovery, and he indulged no such expectation himself. Never perhaps was more entire resignation to the will of God exhibited, than was manifested by Mr. E. during this affliction. Racked with pain the most excruciating, and anticipating a speedy dismissal from the earthly tabernacle, he was yet enabled, through the sustaining and

invigorating power of God, to rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory ; and he was several times found weeping from excessive joy, arising, as he expressed it, from the repeated manifestations of the love of Christ to his soul. So bright were his views of a glorious immortality, and so strong was his faith on the promises of God, that he was divested of all anxiety regarding the present world ; or, if any desire to live still animated his mind, it was that he might more fully proclaim *his* Saviour to perishing sinners. His constant language was that of gratitude and praise ; and when closely interrogated by a dear friend as to the state of his feelings, he exclaimed, “ never in so much pain, but never so happy !”

“ The chamber where the good man meets his fate,
Is privileged beyond the common walks of life.”

And it *was* regarded as a privilege to visit the chamber where Mr. E. was every hour expecting to “ meet his fate ;” or rather to resign his ransomed and happy spirit into the hands of his Redeemer. It might be said of him,

not merely that he was *willing* to die ; but that death was to him an object of earnest desire, as the passage to eternal glory. And although, when he beheld in imagination his mourning family and flock, he could not but feel the bitterness of a final separation, yet the conflict of his mind may be forcibly described by the language of the great apostle ;— “ I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better ; nevertheless, to abide in the flesh is more needful for you.” His appointed time, however, was not yet come. An eminent physician, who was called in at the crisis of the disorder, gave some hopes, that by a strict adherence to the course he prescribed his restoration might be effected. The means used were blessed to the end so much desired by those whose interests appeared to be bound up in him ; the complaint took a favourable turn, and nights of watchful and sleepless anxiety were exchanged for hours of grateful repose and gladdening hope. His recovery was slow, and the effects of the severe disorder were not easily

eradicated. No sooner, however, was he permitted to leave the house, than he resumed his pulpit duties, and, unable to stand from extreme weakness, he officiated for some time in a sitting posture. Delightful indeed were the thoughts of resuming his work ; and in the prospect of his return to the house of prayer, it was remarked by a beloved relative, alluding to the great happiness he had experienced, even in the furnace of affliction, “ You will have much to tell the people, of the dealings of God with your soul ; ” his reply was, “ Oh no, I wish to say nothing respecting myself, I long to meet my people again, only that I may more fully preach Christ.”

But he was permitted to proclaim that Saviour for a short period only, before he was again called from the scene of his earliest labours, and placed by an unerring providence in another and more extensive field. His extreme debility rendered change of air necessary, and the residence of a friend in Birmingham was thought desirable, from the

kind attention he would there receive, and the associations with which that town was connected. Results the most unexpected followed this visit. Candidates for the pastorship of the church and congregation worshipping in Livery Street Chapel, had long been supplying at that place, and Mr. E. was solicited to take an occasional service. His health being much improved, he consented, and the wishes of the people were immediately directed towards him. Assured that he was in every way suited to their desires, their only difficulty lay in removing him from a people so strongly attached to their minister, as were the congregation at Vicar Lane. They ventured, nevertheless, to make the proposition to Mr. E., and he agreed to give the subject a consideration. Many difficulties presented themselves, and not the least was his own unwillingness to leave the people at Coventry. But in returning for a few days to that city, he experienced so decided a change for the worse, in his hitherto improving health, that he was thankful to renew his visit to Bir-

mingham : and thus, one most important inducement was furnished for his settlement there. His rapid recovery after his return ; his partiality for the town and society of Birmingham, and the prospect of a larger sphere of usefulness, together with minor considerations, led him to a determination to accept the call. Followed by the regrets and prayers of the people at Coventry, he finally removed to Birmingham ; where his success, in the all-important work of the salvation of souls through the preaching of the gospel, surpassed what he had previously experienced.

Among the painful circumstances which occurred during his residence at Coventry, the death of his beloved and venerable parents should not be forgotten. It was his mournful duty to improve the affecting event on each occasion by a funeral sermon. His pious mother entered first into rest, and was followed, in little more than two years, by her beloved partner. They both died in the peace and hope of the gospel, exercising unshaken confidence in the refuge which that gospel reveals.

Thus one of the strongest ties which bound him to his native city was broken, and on that account it was with less regret, so far as personal feelings were concerned, that he finally consented to take up his abode, at a distance from the scene of his tenderest recollections.

It was while resident in Coventry that Mr. E. first appeared in public as a writer; his earliest work being a sermon on infant baptism, preached before a numerous assembly in October, 1809, when the author for the first time publicly administered the ordinance of baptism to a number of infants; the text was that well-known passage in Matthew xxviii. 19, “Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.” This sermon was rendered very useful, and in the preface prefixed to it, the author observes, “I can now with unspeakable pleasure declare, that those of my people, who were wavering in their views relative to baptism, are fully confirmed in the good sentiments they first received on the subject; and hoping

others may be benfited by the same remarks, in compliance with the request of my dear friends,—the equal friends of truth, I have put to the press the substance of what I delivered from the pulpit."

This publication was followed by a second sermon, on the Divinity of our Saviour, entitled "Jesus Christ, the Mighty God;" which was extensively circulated, and was the means of establishing many in the grand fundamental doctrine of Christianity, which it defended and faithfully exhibited. The Evangelical Magazine spoke of it thus:— "In a small compass, the usual and invincible arguments for the proper Deity of Christ are here adduced; namely, the titles which he takes—the work which he performs—and, the worship which he receives. These are proposed in a brief, but spirited manner, calculated to produce conviction in the reader's mind, and to establish the great truth for which the author pleads."

Before his removal from Coventry, he also published three sermons to children, entitled

“Little children coming to Jesus, Matt. xix. 14;—“Early acquaintance with the scriptures,” 2 Tim. iii. 15; and “Obedience to parents,” Eph. vi. 1. These were followed by “A manual of Hymns, original and compiled, especially adapted to Meetings for prayer;” and a set of tunes entirely original, entitled “Sacred Harmony.”

“Some of his tunes and anthems” it has been observed, “have been adopted by congregations of various denominations, and are now sung, not only all over Britain, but in every part of the Missionary world. His “Justification,” and “Crucifixion” especially, are very justly admired melodies.”

His sermon on the lamented death of the Princess Charlotte, was also preached in his native city. It was founded on that beautiful and strikingly appropriate passage in Ezekiel xix. 14, “Fire is gone out of a rod of her branches, which hath devoured her fruit, so that she hath no strong rod to be a sceptre to rule. This is a lamentation, and shall be for a lamentation.”

It was in 1819 that Mr. E. became minister of Livery Street chapel, Birmingham ; and while labouring there, his occasional and welcome visits to his former flock, testified the mutual and unimpaired affection which continued to exist between himself and them. At Birmingham, he first became acquainted with the Rev. William Thorpe of Bristol, between whom and himself, a strict and intimate friendship was formed which terminated only in death. The fame of this great and peculiarly interesting preacher, induced Mr. E. to seek an introduction, and a mutual attachment, scarcely ever surpassed by that of the most tender relationship, was the consequence.

Those who knew any thing of Mr. Thorpe are aware, that he advocated some peculiar views of the prophetical parts of scripture, particularly the doctrine of the personal reign of Christ upon earth, during the coming millennium. It was not long after his first acquaintance with Mr. E. that he introduced this favourite topic, and opened to his friend the sources of knowledge, which in his opinion

had enlarged and blessed his own mind. At the instigation, and under the guidance of his beloved friend, Mr. E. seriously devoted his energies to the investigation of the subject. To him prophecy was no new field, and to the astonishment of Mr. Thorpe, his mind seemed fully prepared for the reception of views which his instructor had anticipated, would almost alarm him by the strangeness of their aspect. But never was there a readier pupil or a more willing student than he, when led by the powerful and fascinating talent of his self-appointed teacher, to search into these deep things of God. Mr. Thorpe's remarkable expression, when referring to the avidity with which he entered upon the study of this peculiar doctrine, ought not to be omitted :— “The tinder,” he observed, “was in perfect readiness ; it needed only the application of a single spark to produce the flame.” Frequent and protracted were the conversations, to which this still disputed point gave rise between them ; and often did the midnight hour surprise them in the midst of their discussions, so

intense was the interest excited in the mind of Mr. E. by the doctrine which eventually became so delightful to him. It proved, however, by no means inimical to his regular studies: nor did it in the least degree, interfere with the ardour of his pursuit, after *all* scripture knowledge. On the contrary his own declaration frequently was, that by the adoption of these views, he was *assisted* in his various important researches, and established in his belief of the other and more essential truths of inspiration.

The works published by him in Birmingham were few, viz., "A catechism on the rise and progress of Sabbath schools;" a sermon, entitled "Friendly cautions to youth," and his well-known letter to the Unitarians called "The nine points."* The last men-

In the "Nine Points," the author lays down nine propositions which he conceives clearly deducible from the scriptures, and which in this introductory letter are briefly elucidated, preparatory to their intended establishment in the contemplated succession of letters. The propositions are as follows: "The authors of the Bible assure us, First—That rectitude of sentiment respecting the Deity, and invisible realities is of superlative impor-

tioned work was intended only as an introduction to a series of letters addressed to the Unitarian body ; but having commenced them

tance. Secondly—That divine revelation is the only source from which rectitude of sentiment respecting the Deity, and invisible realities, can be derived. Thirdly—That, at sundry times, and in divers manners, the Deity has condescended to reveal Himself, and invisible realities to the children of men ; and also to collect a summary of all His revelations in the sacred volume. Fourthly—That all the information communicated to man, by divine revelation, whether relating to the Deity, or other invisible things, is communicated analogically ; and only by the instrumentality of the visible creation, are we conducted to the invisible God, and the spiritual world. Fifthly—That the invisible God, Jehovah, the Essence Existing, by the instrumentality of material representations, is analogically revealed to intelligent man, as a Trinity of economical persons. Sixthly—That the Trinity of economical persons, in the Essence existing, voluntarily came under the obligation of an oath, to beatify man through the mediation of Jesus, before the creation. Seventhly—That all the dispensations of providence, from the creation of this system to the universal conflagration, are designed and adapted to develope the mediatorial scheme. Eighthly—That the progeny of Adam are either *holy or sinful*, and *happy or miserable*, in exact proportion to their conformity or contrariety to the mediatorial scheme. And, Ninthly—That whosoever, among Adam's degenerate sons, feel their dependance on the mediatorial scheme, and perceive its adaptation to harmonize the glory of Deity with the holiness and happiness of man, are solely indebted to the sovereign purpose and grace of Jehovah, given us in Christ Jesus, before the creation.

in 1825, only a short time before he left Birmingham ; his removal, and a multiplicity of other affairs, interrupted his plans, and the first was the only letter, that ever appeared in public.

Mr. Eagleton was seven years resident in Birmingham, and while rejoicing in the abundant success which crowned his ministry there, he was yet called to pass through many deep waters of trial and affliction. The removal of a beloved child, three years of age, to whom he was most tenderly attached, was one of many afflictive circumstances, which in the providence of God he there experienced. This was the first breach that was made in his numerous family, and he felt it keenly. His distress was much heightened by the severe and protracted sufferings of the child, arising from a complaint which is often terminated by death in a few days. Perhaps, the most remarkable feature in his domestic cha-

"In my opinion," observes the author, "on each of these principal points the testimony of scripture is diametrically opposed to that of the Unitarians." Page 20.

racter, was his peculiar fondness for young children. His favourite relaxation from intense thought, was to join in their infant sports, and to devise fresh plans for their amusement. At such seasons he might often be heard, training their lisping voices to tones of melody, or simple songs of praise. And with him, the oft-repeated words of the poet were those of truth and experience ;—

“ Delightful task, to rear the tender thought !”

His youngest babe was always the object of his tenderest affection, and it is remembered with mournful pleasure, that he occasionally arranged his thoughts for a week-evening lecture, while traversing his study to and fro, with an infant in his arms. His consistent example, and the firm yet kind discipline exercised towards the elder children, were also his distinguishing characteristics.

*“ ————— well he filled
His place with gravity profound ;
And yet, his look was tenderness,
And in his smile their hearts would bound.”*

He appeared constantly to bear in mind the important exhortation of the apostle, "Fathers, provoke not your children to wrath ;" so cautious was he not to produce wrong impressions upon their minds by hasty or indiscreet punishment.

His unceasing admonitions and profitable directions drawn from the word of God, and enforced by a reference to his own experience : the earnest desires expressed by him for their best welfare ; and above all, his fervent and heartfelt petitions on their behalf, when conducting family devotion, can never be forgotten by them.

Here it may not be inappropriate or uninteresting to introduce a letter written by him to one of his sons, who was at a distance, as an illustration of the style of his correspondence with his family when absent from them :

" My dear Lad,

" Your mother's anxieties and my own solicitude for your welfare, induce me to address you on the all-important and interesting

subject. Ignorant of all your movements, yet remembering that you are in a wicked world, exposed to the temptations of wicked spirits ; and possessed of a desperately wicked and deceitful heart : we cannot but fear for you, and pray that you may fear for yourself. If indeed you do not *fear*, fear to offend God, fear to die, fear being led astray into vicious paths, fear to pursue the sinful pleasures of this world,—in short, if you do not fear that heaven will be lost, that hell will be secured, that eternity will find you in a sinful state ; your danger no tongue can describe, no heart can conceive, none but God, who knows all things, can understand.

“ I hope you do not then by any means try to rid yourself of this fear. I know it is not pleasant to youth, but it is so necessary, that youth is generally ruined without it. It will be your true wisdom to cherish that fear, and promote its growth by all the means which are designed and adapted for its support. Among these means are some which you cannot neglect without sinning against God, in a

more dreadful manner than other young persons around you. If you do not read the scriptures with serious attention, and a desire to understand them,—if you neglect the means of grace, or hear the gospel with indifference,—if you shun the company of christians, and unite with the vile and the ungodly ; if you neglect to pray every day, two or three times in secret :—you will soon be without fear, and when you are once without fear, you will be without God, without Christ, and without hope in the world.

“ I often pray for you, that, instead of this being the case, you may become truly acquainted with the Saviour, and useful in the church of Christ.

“ You do not forget, I hope, that when your father was your age, he was followed by multitudes to hear him preach the glad tidings of salvation. The same grace is sufficient for you : to that grace you are invited to look,—your Father who is in heaven says to you every day, ‘ Wilt thou not from this time say unto me, My father be thou the guide of my

youth?" Will you not say to him then, 'Heavenly Father, I need thy guidance: guide me, O Lord, in the way of truth and righteousness?'

"Dare not to take one step in life without asking counsel of your heavenly Father, and your father on earth; for so surely as you do, you will have painful cause to repent. Form no connexions, enter into no engagements, without first praying to God, and conferring with your father. If ever you feel inclined to do any thing upon which you could not ask God's blessing, or about which you would not like to consult your father, depend upon it, it is wrong; a snare is laid for your feet, from which, if you fall therein, you will not escape but with shame and sorrow. This you know will grieve your parents, grieve your friends, and what is more, offend God and injure your immortal soul.

"Think on these things, my dear lad, and remember that nobody on earth wishes you so well, as

Yours affectionate Father."

The following enquiries and advice also, formed part of a letter, addressed to one of his sons on another occasion.

“ Are you paying any attention to the cultivation of your mind ? Are you aware of the necessity and importance of mental improvement ? You have have not derived much from superior instructors in childhood, for it was not in my power to place you under their care ; and therefore much personal application is necessary if you would attain the dignity of a man. You have, however, had many more advantages than I had : you know sufficient to lead you to the acquisition of more knowledge : if therefore you be not wanting to yourself, you may form and furnish your mind for any situation to which the Lord may call you.

“ I send you the works of Duncan Forbes. *Read, weigh, examine* this book, at least three times during the next year ; and it will make you better acquainted with the great and glorious subjects of divine revelation, than all the commentators I know. Read also with the

same attention, ‘Bellamy’s true religion.’ This book will lead you to better acquaintance with human nature, than all the novels and romances in the world. Combining the study of these books with that of your Bible, you will rapidly become scientific, logical, and more *truly learned*, than multitudes who have studied in schools, colleges and universities.”

His epistolary addresses are remarkably characteristic. Two more letters have been selected as specimens of his mode of writing on religious subjects to particular individuals. The first was written to a young friend, who had once made a high profession of religion, but who had fearfully wandered from the paths of piety,—in short he had become a backslider. It was as follows:—

“ My long lost friend.

“ Among the objects on which some eight or ten years ago, I was wont to gaze with pleasure, you occupied a very prominent and promising station.

“ I never read your heart, nor weighed

your spirit in the balances of the sanctuary. but, viewing you with the eye of charity, and desiring your eternal welfare, I once thought you bade fair for the kingdom.

“ With apparent devotion you joined in the praises and prayers of the faithful ; with serious solicitude you enquired after the things that belonged to your present and eternal peace : with active zeal you endeavoured to promote the salvation of the rising generation, from sabbath to sabbath ; repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, and regeneration by the Holy Ghost, you professed to feel ; at the table of Christ you partook of the memorials of redeeming love, with some who are now in heaven, and more than a few presumed that by this time you would have been eminently useful in the church of God.

“ But oh, my fallen friend, how is your gold become dim, and your fine gold changed ! What an appalling contrast must the present and the past present, to the view of your terrified imagination ! Whither are you go-

ing? what are you doing? Why have you forsaken the Lord? Will you no more return to the God of love? Have you abandoned for ever the one thing needful? Can you appeal to the searcher of hearts and attest that your happiness abounds? Do you not rather only sigh, "O, that it were with me, as in months that are past; when my feet hastened to the house of God: when my ear listened to the joyful sound, and when my tongue, my heart, my all, were engaged with holy pursuits, and imperishable joys?"

"Suffer then, oh suffer the word of exhortation from one who has often thought of you, who still prays for you, and would rejoice over you to do you good. Declare yourself once more on the Lord's side, by diligently attending the ordinances of his house, and maintaining communion with him. Listen to conscience, listen to revelation, listen to reason, listen to the cross, listen to death, listen to judgment and eternity; and gladden the heart of one who assures you he still remains

Your affectionate Friend."

The second letter was addressed to a neighbour, a very worldly-minded man ; but who had manifested the greatest kindness to Mr. E. and his family. Having attended his ministry for a short time, he became somewhat aroused under the preaching of the word, and visited him for the purpose of conversing upon the concerns of his soul. But finding that immediate and constant self-denial was indispensable to a participation in the holiness and happiness of religion, he discontinued his attendance upon the means of grace, stifled the voice of conscience, and resolved still to pursue his career of sinful pleasure. With feelings of sorrow and disappointment Mr. E. wrote to him as follows :

“ Dear Sir,

“ Inclined by motives truly benevolent, I take up my pen to discharge a duty which I feel I owe to you above many. All men have some claim upon the affectionate regards of those who consider themselves the servants of Jesus ; and that claim varies with the pecu-

liarities of the several stations assigned them ; augmenting or diminishing the obligations of a good man to seek their present and eternal welfare. Far be it from me to offer incense on the altar of flattery, or the shrine of human pride, when I say that your urbanity of manners, intellectual culture, neighbourly kindness, personal generosity, and the high respect you have shewn me in my ministerial character, unitedly urge me to avow my conviction, that providence requires me to do what I can to save you, as one who has more than ordinary claims to my best and earnest solicitude.

“ But how shall I exemplify the feelings which pervade my bosom ? Silver and gold, influence and popularity, honours, pleasures, or worldly grandeur, I have none to bestow ; and could I lay a fortune at your feet, could I place the crown of empire on your head, the debt of genuine gratitude and true benevolence would remain unpaid. Destined to immortality, nothing is truly valuable to man save that which bears directly upon his eternal

interests ; and secures to him the imperishable joys of another and a better world. This world will soon recede and disappear ; these mortal scenes are already folding up : we have all nearly acted our parts, and are about to quit the stage. Our concern should be respecting what is to follow. The eternal world—the account to be given—the books to be opened—the dread decision—the solemn sentence—eternity, eternity, eternity !

“ My heart was once delighted with the prospect of being your honoured guide to the blissful seats above. I thought the day of your redemption was at hand, when you hastened to enquire at my mouth, what is intended to be taught by the word of God. Under the ministry of that word I know you felt ; conscience was awakened, and whispered ‘ thou art the man ! ’ The light of heaven began to illumine your understanding, you saw, you were amazed, and charmed while condemned. Guided by the glimmerings only of that divine irradiation, you began to see things in their right aspect, and relative importance ; the

domination of the senses began to yield to the empire of reason ; the interests of the body to those of the soul ; the affairs of time to those of eternity. O had you persevered in that reformation, so well begun, you might now have known the liberty of the sons of God ; you might now have said, ‘ thanks be to God, though I *was* the servant of sin, I have through grace obeyed that form of sound doctrine delivered to dying men ! ’ Sin pardoned, righteousness imputed, heirship to glory, communion with God, usefulness in the world, in the church, and among relations, friends, and acquaintance, might now have been your distinguishing honours ! Yes far greater things than these I dared to hope ;—I hoped to see following in your steps, some at least of those, who, like yourself, have gone too long in the downward road. Those immortal beings, those imperishable souls, those intelligent and accountable spirits, clothed at present with mortal forms, who, you are sure, are not prepared to die, I dared to hope, would by your instrumentality be brought to know and love

the Saviour. Yes, I *did* expect your conversion to be the means of the conversion of other sinners, who still are far from God ; and oh, the sight, the pleasing sight, of one such sinner at the foot of the cross, would have made the angels to rejoice through all the realms of bliss.

“ Well, God be praised, it is not yet too late ; you are still in the land of the living ; and if the vision has been delayed awhile, it may yet be realized. Nothing is too hard for the Lord, who is excellent in counsel and wonderful in working. Reason, enlightened and renewed by grace, may after all burst the bands of sense and sin, and assert its lawful claims.

“ Allow me at least to entreat you to reconsider these things, while I assure you that I will not cease to pray for you. But do not, dear Sir, delay. Nothing tarries around you. Time flies, death hastens, judgment approaches, heaven calls ; forgiveness is proclaimed ; mercy is offered : seek, and you shall find, ask, and it shall be given. ‘ As I

live,' saith the Lord God, ' I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but rather that he should return and live.' ' Turn ye, turn ye, for why will ye die?' ' Now is the accepted time.'

" Difficulties I am aware will present themselves ; the task I have ventured to impose is of no ordinary magnitude. The world, the flesh, and the devil, will unite their force to withstand you ; but your *all* is at stake. Omnipotent grace will interpose ; and should you be the means of saving any by whom you have been led astray, how will your heart rejoice in the riches of grace !

" Oh, thou Spirit of the living God, render this affectionate address the means of saving a soul from death ! Join me, my dear Sir, in this petition to the throne of grace ; and believe me yours

Most sincerely."

The closing years of Mr. Eagleton's life were spent in Huddersfield, whither he removed from Birmingham at the end of the year 1826.

No minister had yet been chosen by the people at the New Independent chapel, Ramsden-street ; and Mr. E. being a perfect stranger among them, on the delivery of his first sermon an anxious curiosity was excited, as to whether or not he was "moveable" from Birmingham. He had previously entertained no thoughts of a change, but after repeated visits to Huddersfield the wishes of the people were so decided and unanimous, that he finally consented once more to change his place of abode, and sphere of usefulness, and replied to their pressing and united call, by the following letter :—

Birmingham, Dec. 2nd, 1826.

"To the church and congregation assembling in Ramsden-street chapel, Huddersfield.

"Beloved brethren,

"Your very cordial and affectionate invitation to the pastoral office, I have duly received ; the manner in which it is presented, and the circumstances which have attended its production, impel me to regard it as the voice

of God ; and with this conviction, I delivered my resignation of the pastoral office at Birmingham yesterday, December 1st, that I might without longer delay signify my hearty acceptance of your call.

“ With mingled emotions of fear and hope, pleasure and pain, joy and regret, I renounce my connexion with this part of the church of Christ, that I may associate myself with you. The veil of futurity is impenetrable to eyes of flesh and blood, and neither you nor I know as yet what we are doing, or whither divine providence is conducting us ; but it is good to be assured that He whose kingdom ruleth over all, most certainly has the guidance of this important affair. But guides He in mercy or in anger ? This must be determined by following effects. Providence, however, subordinate in all its dispensations, to the great scheme of grace, cannot fail to be for us, if we enter into the plans of heaven ; and make the adorable Jesus all in all.

“ I intend, if the Lord will, to appear among you on the fourth sabbath of the pre-

sent month. I hope I shall come in the fulness of the blessings of the gospel of Christ, and interested in all your prayers.

“ Pray, my dear friends, that I may prove a faithful, affectionate, zealous, successful, and devoted minister of Christ ; a blessing not only to you but to the town, and a burning and shining light irradiating in every direction the neighbourhood around ; and that I may be in truth,

Your loving and beloved
Pastor in the Lord.”

Of the estimation in which he was held during the six years he was stationed in Huddersfield, the writer need not speak ; having happily obtained permission to publish the interesting pages which are appended to this memoir, written shortly after his decease by one of his attached friends, and thrown into the form of “ Recollections of his ministerial character and labours.” Neither is it necessary here to attempt a description of his peculiar style of preaching, or to notice the

encouraging success of his ministrations in Huddersfield :—These are sketched in the “Recollections,” by a masterly hand, guided indeed by feelings of affection the most ardent, and regret the most sincere, yet producing a portrait true to the original, without flattery or undeserved eulogium.

In 1829 he was called to resign another beloved child, who died after a lingering illness, before she had attained her third year. This stroke was followed by one still more severe, in the sudden death of his only brother who was some years his junior, to whom he was most devotedly attached. The suddenness of the event permitted not the alleviation of a last farewell, nor that of breathing the words of hope and salvation over the dying pillow. He arrived only in time to follow the remains of his beloved brother to the grave, and returned to his family more deeply and permanently affected than by any former trial.

The following are the principal works published by Mr. Eagleton while at Huddersfield : “A Charge,” delivered at the ordination of a

young minister; a Pastoral Epistle, entitled
“The Revelation of Jesus Christ;”* an Epis-

* The “Revelation of Jesus Christ” exhibits Mr. Eagleton’s views on the second advent of the Messiah. The introductory remarks enforce the importance of the study of prophecy to the Christian, and contain an exposure of various erroneous notions, as to its fulfilment, which have no foundation in the word of God. To quote from the work itself:—“The question is not whether the adorable Jesus, who appeared once to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself, *will appear* the second time, without sin unto salvation; but whether he will come again, *before the conflagration* of the universe. That the Saviour *will* come again, is believed by all or nearly all, who profess to believe the Holy Scriptures; but whether this second coming of our Lord in personal glory and majesty, will be an event *prior to* the millenial glory, or *after*:—at the end of all things, or long anterior to the consummation, is the question before us.”

For the purpose of assisting those to whom the “Pastoral Epistle” is addressed, in the investigation of this subject; the author embodies in the work, a selection of passages from the Scriptures, which he classifies under the following particulars:—First,—The manner in which the sacred writers describe the time of our Lord’s revelation:—Second, The signs by which the approach of that time may be observed by his disciples:—Third, The revelation itself which will follow the signs:—Fourth, The state of mankind when the day of revelation shall arrive:—Fifth, The events which will accompany:—Sixth, The consequences which will follow,—and Seventh, The purposes for which our attention is directed, in the sacred oracles, to the revelation of the Lord Jesus. “These texts,” observes Mr. E., in pursuance of the plan thus laid down, “will supply unequi-

tolary Address to Junior ministers of all denominations, entitled “The Covenant of Works,”* dedicated to the Archbishop of York; and the Sermon which is affixed to this memoir. It has been previously intimated that Mr. E. possessed some degree of poetical talent; and, had leisure and opportunity offered

vocal and diversified testimony, if I am not greatly mistaken, to the revelation of the Lord Jesus at the *commencement* of the latter day glory.” Page 11.

* The arguments contained in the “Covenant of Works,” are grounded on one main position; viz. That no design of Jehovah was frustrated by Adam’s disobedience. One great end which the author has in view, is to prove, that no covenant, compact, or agreement, was made between God and his creature, Adam; but that simply a command or law was given. This position is established in the elucidation of the three following propositions. First,—According to the Scriptures, it was never the design of God, either to convey *eternal* life, or to subject to *eternal* death, through the medium of Adam. Second, He never proposed to Adam, directly or indirectly, for any purpose whatever, to *covenant* with his Maker, either on his own account, or on account of his posterity. Third, It was not possible, that such a proposal should be made by Jehovah to our first father, Adam, or that such a design should be formed by the adorable Creator.—“Impossible,” the author observes, “in the nature of things; incompatible with the previous procedure of providence; and subversive of the everlasting purpose of grace.” Pages 62 and 104.

for its cultivation, he might probably have been disposed to employ it in a greater measure than he did.

The book of Hymns already referred to, contains many proofs that in sacred poetry he might have excelled. The following specimens of his style, have been copied from the albums of ladies, who obtained his contributions.

THE BIBLE.

“ There is a volume, full of wondrous words,
With which no album, (tho’ replete with lines
Compos’d and sung by angel minds,) could vie,—
The volume of Jehovah!—Truth in every page!
That truth which surely guides bewildered minds
To holiness and God, by Jesus’ cross
Is written there:—and saints, with eyes illumed
From heaven; behold, believe, adore, and love
The sacred word, by inspiration given.”

HUMAN WISDOM.

“ Though blest with powers angelic, men have prov’d
Themselves most finish’d fools:—and finish’d fools
Will evermore be found among the great

Philosophers and scholars, nobles, royal heads,
Till wisdom from above illume the mind.
For he that trusts to his own heart, a fool
Is found before the Lord, the only wise,
Infallible, impartial judge, of minds
Ordained by him, to live through endless years.
But who among the sons of men, so apt
To dream of self-sufficiency, as they
Who know the round of science, arts, and tongues,
Yet dark remain, enveloped still, in all
The shades of Nature's night."

" IMPROMPTU.

" A LADY TO HER MIRROR.

" O ! beautiful mirror, in thee I behold,
A faithful display of my features and dress ;
With eloquent silence, by thee I am told,
My beauties external, which mortals caress.

But ah, what a glass is the volume of grace !
Which shews me my heart—even all it contains ;
When I stand before that, confusion of face,
With terror of conscience, is all that remains !

" I too am a mirror, in which should be seen
The features and dress of the bride of my Lord :
O, Spirit Divine ! more than ever I've been
Now let me be truly conformed to thy word.'

Had Mr. Eagleton's life been prolonged, it is more than probable, that many large and important works would have been produced by him. Various manuscripts have been discovered among his papers, containing plans or outlines of intended publications.

One work on the "Cherubim," was so far in progress, that wood cuts were executed for its illustration, which are now in the possession of survivors.

In fact he had laid out much work for his head and his hands to do; anticipating many years of active pursuit after knowledge, and increasing power to diffuse that knowledge around him. But such was not the will of God.—He who "turneth man to destruction, and saith, return ye children of men," had commissioned the messengers of death, slowly but surely to fulfil their work, and to seize as their victim, him upon whom many hearts were fixed, and to whom many eyes were directed, as their future instructor.

Only a short period had elapsed, after his removal from Birmingham, when he began to

feel effects from cold, such as he had never before experienced. He was seized with a distressing cough attended with a high degree of inflammation at the chest; and although this was subdued by prompt and judicious treatment; he never after enjoyed that full and constant flow of health, with which he had been favoured at Birmingham. He soon discovered that the air of Huddersfield, so healthful and invigorating to most individuals, was too keen for him.

No serious consequences, however, were apprehended during the first four years of his residence in Huddersfield; and he was enabled to pursue his work without any material interruption during that period: but, towards the close of 1831 an evident change for the worse was felt by him. Dyspepsia with all its harassing concomitants visited him, in its most distressing form; about this time also, he perceived symptoms of an affection of the heart, and although every means was resorted to for its removal, this complaint never left him, but continued more or less to distress

and alarm him, during the remainder of his life. His cough also returned upon him, and so violent were the paroxysms of coughing, that internal bleeding was not unfrequently the result. Thus, a tendency of blood to the head, of which he was extremely susceptible, was alarmingly increased. Various medicines and experiments were tried without effect; yet, while the hopes of his friends began to darken, he was himself most sanguine, as to the efficacy of every new remedy. He often remarked that he believed the Lord had much work yet in store for him, and would therefore bless some of the means used, to his ultimate restoration.

It was remarkable that he felt less of his various complaints when in the pulpit, and engaged in the work he best loved, than at any other time. After passing a week of trying affliction, he often preached on the sabbath, with an energy that surprised both himself and his hearers.

There was one affecting result of his complicated disorders which he had not anticipated.

His sight, which had hitherto been remarkably strong, became seriously affected ; and a dimness, rendered doubly distressing from the necessity it imposed of entire cessation from reading and writing, gradually increased. At first, it occurred only at intervals, continuing for a few moments ; but it afterwards became a constant affliction, and at times his power of vision was so much obstructed, that he was unable to distinguish the features of individuals in the same apartment.

Never was his entire resignation to the will of God more manifest, than during the distressing period which followed his first consciousness of this affliction. On discovering one morning that he could not, even with the aid of glasses, read a chapter in the large family bible, although deeply affected, he resigned it into the hands of another member of the family without one expression of impatience. When it was observed by a friend, “It would be a great trial should your sight never be restored !” he replied, “If it is the Lord’s will that my health should be regained, I have

no doubt regarding the restoration of my sight; but if he designs not the former, the latter is of little consequence."

One Sabbath morning will occur to the remembrance of many who loved him. He had ascended the pulpit, and was about to read the chapter at the opening of the service, when, to his great distress he found his sight unequal to the task. A painful pause ensued, and an undefined sensation of fear was felt throughout the congregation; but, after descending from his place to order a fresh arrangement of the blinds in the chapel windows, he returned, and choosing a portion of scripture which was written in his memory, as well as upon the pages before him, he proceeded with the service. To this expedient he often subsequently resorted, as the dimness of his eyes increased, repeating rather than reading the greater part of the chapter or psalm he had selected. Thus, debarred from the use of his books and his pen, meditation was his only resource during the hours of solitude he sometimes chose to spend. At such seasons,

the communings of his spirit with things above, would fill his mind with that pure enjoyment which the world cannot give.

Although the power of disease was daily gaining ground, attended by extreme weakness, he persevered in the preparation and delivery of his sermons from Sabbath to Sabbath. It was well, both for himself and the people, that notes were unnecessary to aid him in his discourses, otherwise he must have ceased his public labours much sooner. It was with gratitude to the bestower of every talent, that he sometimes referred to the ease and pleasure with which his sermons were extemporaneously delivered.

In the spring of the last year he was destined to spend on earth, it was thought advisable that he should try the effect of a journey to Birmingham, and his native city Coventry. To this change he looked forward with sanguine expectation. Accompanied by Mrs. E., therefore, he commenced his journey in April, 1832, enlivened by hope, and fully expecting to return at least in a fair way for recovery.

He visited many kind friends, from whom he received every possible attention during a six weeks' absence. At Birmingham especially, all likely means of benefit were tried. Fresh advice was sought, and additional medicines were procured. At first, some good effect seemed to be produced, so much so that he occupied the pulpit at Livery street, and preached with his accustomed energy: and, although the dimness of his sight was such, that he was unable to distinguish an individual in the congregation, it was not perceptible to his hearers. Before returning home, however, the most alarming symptoms recurred with distressing power; and his sympathising friends took leave of him, under a full conviction that they should see his face no more.

Travelling back to Huddersfield by easy stages, he again felt his hopes revive. Mild weather and change of scene appeared to have a beneficial influence; and, for a few days after his return, even his friends indulged the hope, that the journey might ultimately produce the desired effect. But again and again

were these pleasing anticipations blighted by severe attacks, particularly of the painful and alarming complaint at the heart, to which he had so long been subject. Every new anxiety respecting his family, or the concerns of the chapel, increased the pain and violence of this disorder, which was probably induced by the overwhelming solicitudes necessarily involved in the establishment of a new interest, in addition to the responsibility and care connected with a numerous family. For many months previous to his death, the choking sensations occasioned by this disease, frequently prevented him from lying down, and he passed sleepless nights propped up by pillows in a sitting posture.

The time now approached when he was called to decline his public labours. Although he felt such a step was absolutely necessary, it was with inexpressible regret that he gave up his pulpit exercises; and only with the prospect of resuming his beloved work, after a stated time, could he be induced to yield to the solicitations of his friends, and the advice of his medical attendants.

He still, however, visited the courts of the Lord's house, in the capacity of a hearer, and listened with much pleasure to the various ministers who supplied his place. With peculiar delight he anticipated the services of the late Rev. S. Saunders of Liverpool, who was engaged to preach the sermons at the anniversary of the opening of the chapel. But this pleasure was denied him. A fortnight before the occasion, to which he had been looking forward, he experienced so decided a change for the worse, that he was not permitted to leave the house. Under feelings of severe disappointment, softened indeed by the remembrance, that all his times were in the hands of his Heavenly Father, he penned with great difficulty the following letter, which he directed to be read to his people, on the Sabbath previous to the anniversary.

“ My dear friends,

“ I am exceedingly grieved and disappointed that I cannot personally appear among you to-day, as my design was to stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance.

I hope, however, that as my affliction is a sufficient apology for my absence, it will prove also an occasion of exciting your liberality next Lord's day. Of the preacher who is expected on that day, I need say nothing : it is impossible that the name and talent of a Saunders should be forgotten at Ramsden-street ; but what is still better, I believe the God of ministers is with you.

“ The patience with which you have endured my long affliction, the christian kindness with which my brethren have supplied the pulpit, and the many and fervent prayers put up by you for me, all testify that the Lord of Hosts is with us. I cannot but hope, therefore, that next Lord's-day, you will give bountifully and of a willing mind, as a people indulged with the smiles of providence, though greatly tried with

Your afflicted affectionate
Pastor.”

He never again occupied the pulpit. His last public act was the administration of the

Lord's supper to his own people, on the first sabbath in August, about four weeks previous to his death. At this solemn and deeply affecting service, he took a last farewell of the scene of his labours, and the people of his charge. A week after, he was confined to bed, from which he had as long as possible withheld himself; but was able occasionally to sit up for an hour or two, and even the slightest relief awakened in his mind more lively emotions of the hope which had not even yet forsaken him, that he might ultimately recover. When at length he was reduced to the necessity of constant confinement to bed, and it was intimated to him that no hope of recovery could be entertained, he confessed that he felt it impossible entirely to resign himself; yet he trusted that strength *would* be given according to his day.

Several restless days and nights ensued, when he was seized with a violent bleeding at the nose, which could be stopped only by the severest measures; occasioning such difficulty of breathing, that he never afterwards slept

without the most painful inconvenience. This was followed two or three days after, by a severe fit, which was expected by his medical attendants to terminate in death; but he survived the shock and gradually recovered the use of his faculties and reasoning powers. He appeared quite unconscious of this event, but after its occurrence he became more resigned to the thoughts of death; and how deeply consolatory to his friends was his temporary and unexpected revival, affording as it did an opportunity of witnessing the calm resignation and even holy joy, which he was enabled to exhibit! The chief source of anguish now remaining, seemed to be his removal at the very time when he was apparently most required both in his family and among his people. When speaking of this mysterious part of the dispensation, he said, "I should certainly, had it been the Lord's will, have wished to carry on the interests of the cause, he has chosen me to establish."

Viewing death as the consequence of sin, he could never see in it the charms with which

by some minds it is invested. He often expressed his surprise, at the light in which the poet beheld it when he sang—

“ Ah, lovely appearance of death !
What sight upon earth is so fair ?
Not all the gay pageants on earth,
Can with a dead body compare !

He felt indeed the force of the apostle's language, “ The sting of death is sin ;” and as a pardoned and justified sinner, could rejoice with the same apostle when he said, “ Thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ !” But he looked forward to the glorious day, when this corruption shall put on incorruption, and when this mortal shall put on immortality, for the consummation of that victory ; and regarded the untried and fearful combat with the last enemy, as that from which nature may justly shrink,—and the gloomy chambers of the grave, as a resting place not to be desired.

His restlessness was now constantly accompanied by pain, and his sufferings were often

intense. He was one morning in great agony, when a beloved relative observed, "Though I love you so much, I can do nothing to relieve you for a moment!" he answered, "No; the love of the creature never appeared so inefficient as now." It was responded, "But you have a hope beyond the grave?" He replied, "Yes, but not a joyful one." He had previously described his affliction, as of so depressing a nature, that it sometimes darkened his brightest evidences. Being asked by an aged friend, the state of his mind, he said, "I have no tremulous fears, though I have some dark clouds to look through; yet, (he added) had I ten thousand souls I could trust them all to the mediation of Christ;" and exclaimed with energy, "It is a rock—it is all rock! I feel no temptation to doubt!"

Towards the close of the last week in August, his friends, apprehending the solemn change was nigh, paid him frequent visits. On one occasion a goodly number had assembled together, to take a last farewell of their beloved pastor, when he addressed them indi-

ividually. In bidding them each adieu, he became so greatly agitated, that he burst into tears, and they were compelled by their feelings to quit the room. Shortly after, his little son, three years of age, was brought to him, and at the sight of this beloved object his feelings again overcame him, and he wept aloud.

His love to this his youngest child was a tie to earth, so strong and yet so tender, that he even expressed a desire for its early removal ; fearing to leave so sweet a flower to the withering blights of a sinful world. This desire was singularly accomplished, in two months after the father's death, when the infant spirit was summoned to join his parent in the regions of the blessed.

The gratitude expressed by him for the many mercies with which he had been favoured during his illness was unbounded ; his chief regret being, that he was not permitted to proclaim the gospel to the last. " Yet," he added, when speaking of this subject, " how do I know, but my affliction and death may

be the means of more good than my life has been?"

The closing hours of his life, though not attended by the rapturous emotions which so singularly marked his affliction in the former period of his life, were yet a pleasing exemplification of unshaken confidence in the one atonement of Christ, and the faith of the gospel. Three or four days previous to his death, he expressed himself perfectly resigned to the will of God. Speaking of his family he said, "I fear not to leave the widow and the fatherless in the hands of my God."

During the preceding night he had been heard to repeat,—

“ O, for an overcoming faith,
To cheer my dying hours !
To triumph o'er the monster death,
And all his frightful powers.”

On the Saturday and Sunday he seemed very wishful to speak to all around him, respecting the important concerns of eternity, but the state of his tongue and mouth from the effects

of fever, scarcely allowed him to say any thing intelligibly ; and it appeared to give him much pain, when after a great effort to speak, he found he was not understood. The chief portion of the few remaining hours allotted to him were spent in meditation and prayer, so far at least as his incessant pain increased by severe applications would allow.

Having requested the removal of a large blister, the pain of which was intolerable ; his wish was complied with, and in the interval of comparative ease which followed, he repeated the following verse, —

“ O to grace now great a debtor,
Daily I’m constrained to be !
Let that grace, Lord, like a fetter,
Bind my wandering heart to thee ! ”

On another occasion he repeated with great delight two verses from his favourite hymn, —

“ Guide me, oh thou great Jehovah,
Pilgrim through this barren land ;
I am weak, but thou art mighty,

Hold me by thy powerful hand ;
Bread of Heaven,
Feed me till I want no more !

“ Open now the crystal fountain,
Whence the healing streams do flow ;
Let the fiery, cloudy, pillar,
Lead me all my journey through ;
Strong Deliverer,
Be thou still my strength and shield !”

At the words, “ Strong Deliverer,” his voice became loud and energetic ; more so than it had been for many days. To his family who surrounded his bed, he frequently addressed himself, expressing his tender love for them, and his hope that they might all meet him in a happy eternity : pointing them to that Saviour who was so precious to him in the trying hour, and whose rod and staff were evidently his support through the dark valley of the shadow of death.

On the Sabbath morning being reminded that it was the Lord’s day, the following verses were repeated by him with an expres-

sion of pleasure beaming on his countenance, though his voice was feeble and inarticulate :

“ Welcome and precious to my soul
Are these sweet days of love,
But what a Sabbath shall I keep,
When I shall rest above !

“ These are my *preparation* days,
And when my soul is dressed,
These sabbaths shall deliver me
To my eternal rest !”

One of his church-members calling to see him, found him in great pain ; and quoting from the 73rd psalm said to him, “ When heart and flesh fail”—when Mr. E. interrupted him, and with clasped hands and uplifted eyes, exclaimed, “ God *is* the strength of my heart and my portion for ever !”

Before the close of the Sabbath he endeavoured to express the gratitude of his soul in a portion of that beautiful hymn, beginning,

“ O what shall I do, my Saviour to praise ?
So faithful and true, so plenteous in grace,

So strong to deliver, so good to redeem,
The weakest believer that hangs upon him!"

During the night though apparently more composed, he said very little, and for an hour or two before the final moment he had not attempted to speak ; his articulation becoming so difficult, and his voice so weak, that it was impossible to converse with him. But, a few moments before he breathed his last, to the astonishment of those who were listening with intense anxiety for his parting words, he exclaimed, with a loud and distinct voice, "He will appear, He will appear, He will appear!" and then gently resigned his spirit into the hands of the Lord Jesus, at three o'clock on the morning of Sept. 3rd, 1832.

The large and respectable attendance at the funeral evinced the high estimation in which Mr. E. was held, in the town and neighbourhood. The vicars of Huddersfield and Almondbury, with a number of the clergy, and many ministers of the independent denomination—Baptists—Wesleyans—and those of the

New Methodist Connexion, spontaneously assembled to render the last tribute of respect to his memory. These were followed by a large and varied train of mourners, who by the solemnity of their manner, and the expression of sorrow upon their countenances, testified at once their veneration for the departed, and their deep regret at his removal.

The funeral services were performed by the Rev. Messrs. Shawyer, Cockin, Waterhouse, and the late Dr. Boothroyd. His remains were interred in the burying ground at Highfield, not far from those of the venerable Moorhouse.

A few sabbaths after his death a funeral sermon was preached to a crowded and deeply affected congregation, by his beloved friend the Rev. Wm. Thorpe. The text was, "And his disciples went and took up the body and buried it, and went and told Jesus." Matt. xiv. 12.

RECOLLECTIONS
OF THE
MINISTERIAL CHARACTER
AND
LABOURS
OF THE
LATE REV. JOHN EAGLETON,

Being an Address delivered by a Member of his Church, in Huddersfield,
in the School Room of the Chapel, on the Evening of the 17th
October, 1832.

THE Author of these humble "Recollections" supposes that none can peruse them, without discovering that they were not composed with a view to publication.

The occasion on which the address was delivered, was one which excited deep emotion, and seemed to justify its unrestrained expression ; and it is probable, therefore, that many passages will be found, in which the language is too strong and unqualified, to commend itself to any but those to whom it was really addressed.

From the high estimate given of Mr. Eagleton's character and talents as a preacher, the writer sees not the slightest reason, after the lapse of eight years, to detract, whatever faults he may detect in his own manner of describing them ; and having consented to the insertion of this imperfect sketch here, it is thought better to give it in its own form and language rather than so to prune and revise it, as to deface its identity.

Huddersfield, April, 1841.

RECOLLECTIONS,

I HAVE engaged, my dear fellow-worshippers, briefly to occupy your attention this evening, by attempting to recall and delineate some few of the leading features of those favoured ministrations, which we have together for a while enjoyed, but of which it has pleased our Heavenly Father now to deprive us.

Deeply interesting, to us at least, as is the theme, and worthy of powers to which I make no pretensions, I feel relieved from all embarrassment, both by the social nature of this service, and by the assurance that I am addressing those whose sympathy will incline

them to invest with high importance whatever may be advanced. We come together as companions in bereavement; alike in our affectionate veneration for the deceased, and in sorrow of heart at his removal; and perhaps we are alike too in the opinion, that whatever better qualifications might have been possessed to do justice to the character of him whose loss we mourn, none could have really understood him, who had not sat under his ministry, and enjoyed his friendship. And let us, my dear friends, be still further united in the desire, not merely to be interested, or even affected, by having our departed minister placed again, for a few moments, before our mind's eye; but to be thus led to "give the more earnest heed, to those things that through his means we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip."

We will begin where Providence first introduced him to our notice; you will recollect that it was in August, 1826. Having been invited to supply our pulpit for a few Sabbaths, at the suggestion of a minister, who had long

known him, and who was also acquainted with our wants and position as a people, Mr. Eagleton came to Huddersfield, an entire stranger, personally, to us all.

Seldom, perhaps, has been produced by a single sermon a more remarkable excitement, than that which was caused by the first which Mr. Eagleton delivered within these walls ;— the sermon on Satanic influence, from Matt. xii. 44, 45. It was not the excitement of evanescent feeling often attendant on rapturous eloquence or impassioned appeal ; but the excitement of intellect, that awakening of deep thought which arises from the lucid exhibition of important truth.

The vast amount of scriptural information manifested with this mysterious subject, and the clearness, force, and solemnity which characterized the sermon, aroused and firmly rivetted the attention of all who heard him. The wonder of the Israelites could scarcely be greater, when the waters gushed out of the flinty rock, than was that of the congregation assembled on that morning, when

a text of scripture apparently so hard and unpromising was made, at the touch of this man of God, to roll out streams of instruction, deep, astonishing, and divine. Nor was the effect produced less powerful and extensive, when some weeks afterward, Mr. E. divulged amongst us, the doctrine so clearly deducible from the verse he chose as his text,—“Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first Resurrection.”

Had the ancient faith of miracles been restored to the church, scarcely would it have caused greater stir, or have done more, ultimately, to produce a new conviction of the divine importance and inspiration of the bible, than did these two remarkable discourses, in connection with all which Mr. E. delivered, on his visits previous to his settlement in Huddersfield. A cloud of spiritualizing mystery seemed at once rolled off the sacred writings, and they were exhibited in their own harmonious literality and truth; the book of God thus becoming regarded as a mine of more available treasure, than ever it had been thought before.

The value of such preaching was not merely felt and acknowledged by a *few* amongst us, but on enquiry it was found to be a general sentiment throughout our infant society, that *this* should be the man, if it were the will of God, who should go in and out before us.

Accordingly, when the proposition was actually brought forward, at separate meetings of our congregation, and then diminutive church, that Mr. Eagleton should be presented with a call to the pastorship ; it is not enough to say, that every vote was given in his behalf, for each one raised his hand with a spirit and promptitude, that shewed the choice to be, not merely that of an assembly, but the separate unbiased election of each individual heart.

According to this unanimous call, to take the oversight of us in the Lord, our late beloved pastor settled in Huddersfield at Christmas, 1826 : and when he *did* come, it seemed truly to be “in the fullness of the blessings of the gospel of peace.” The well-attended morning and afternoon service, and the crowded

chapel on the Sabbath evening, for months after his settlement, told that it was universally confessed that a great man had come into our midst.

I well recollect, and perhaps many are here who do so too, with what enquiring anxiety we came to a meeting held in this room, on an evening I believe only a few days after his final coming amongst us. It was the first anniversary of the actual opening of the chapel, at the end of December. We had already been convinced that he was a mighty preacher, but we had not yet known how he would prove himself, in a social meeting for prayer and thanksgiving. It was a deeply interesting and highly gratifying occasion. Instead of comporting himself as a consciously great preacher condescending to take part in a humble meeting; instead of on the one hand exhibiting that hardness of character which could not fervently enter into such an engagement, or on the other of intimating, in an attempt to please, that since we had now made choice of a minister, and had every prospect

of comfort and prosperity, we might relax into passive enjoyment and rest awhile on our oars ; you recollect no doubt with what deep and faithful affection he uttered sentiments, such as the following :—

“ Brethren, this cannot but be to you an interesting service. You have abundant reason for thanksgiving, but I beseech you “ to rejoice with trembling ; you are at this “ moment more liable to temptation, more “ exposed to spiritual danger, than ever you “ have been, since you first assembled within “ these walls. Having just become furnished “ through providence with a minister whom I “ rejoice to believe you love, you are precisely “ in the circumstances, in which a congrega- “ tion are inclined to say, ‘ now we shall do ; “ we have a commodious chapel, an accepta- “ ble minister, and an increasing attendance ; “ now we are sure of prosperity and delight.’ “ Oh my dear brethren, let me warn you, “ most affectionately, now, in the commence- “ ment of our interesting connexion, not to “ make your minister the foundation of your

“hopes, or the centre of your union. Every
“thing will be to you prosperous or adverse,
“happy or unhappy—just as God shall please
“to make them so. Let your only confidence,
“your only bond of union, be the Chief Shep-
“herd, who gave his life for the sheep. It is
“right you should love your minister, but oh,
“put him not in the place of Christ; for if you
“do—woe to your preacher, and woe to your-
“selves!”

The spirit and effect of the address, of which these are but a few imperfect sentences, was particularly solemn; and you well know that these were sentiments, which in faithfulness and christian love, he often subsequently repeated; anxious that all we did should be with a single eye to the glory of God.

Neither Mr. Eagleton nor we could possibly expect, that the crowding excitement at his coming should permanently continue. However it *did* continue longer than we had any right to anticipate, causing of course, some temporary diminution in other congregations. Not but that it would have been more pleasing

to us all, that the congregation should have retained permanently, the numbers of which it for a while consisted ; but from the time of Mr. E.'s first becoming acquainted with the size and character of the town, he decidedly pronounced the chapel much too large ; and thought it vain to expect, that except under some special excitement, it should ever be completely occupied

The tongue of slander loves to vent itself against objects of dignity and worth. Some accounts had reached us, even previous to Mr. E.'s being chosen our minister, of an unfavourable character. Amongst other things it was said—“ Yes, he will seem to you to be indeed a great man ; and he has, in truth, some eight or ten sermons of a rare description, and worthy of a powerful mind ; but when these are exhausted, you must expect but humble fare.” Of course our choice of him demonstrated our disbelief of these reports ; but still, one could scarcely avoid looking for something like the colour of such a fact ; and when sabbath after sabbath passed

on, and every sermon seemed worthy of being placed on the list of rare ones, we were naturally disposed to ask at the conclusion of each, "Well, is this then to be the last?" But, my friends, the last good sermon never came, till he for the last time ascended the pulpit ; and opened to us the scriptures.

His excellence as a preacher did not in any measure consist in the number of sermons in his portfolio, however many and excellent, but in his sterling talent, and its sanctified use. In his just perception, and clear discrimination ;—in his humble and implicit following of the Holy Scriptures, wherever they might lead him ; and in his deep, and extensive, and ever increasing acquaintance with the sacred volume.

You will, I am sure, readily testify that our earliest impressions of the highly *instructive* character of our late dear pastor's preaching, were amply borne out by the entire sequel of his history amongst us. His honest and independent mind, which called no man master, but embraced truth wherever he found it, was

continually bringing forth from its treasury, things new and old. His discourses furnished us with abundant topics for edifying conversation. There was always something to awaken thought and excite enquiry. Not unfrequently he uttered statements of a somewhat startling character ; but calm examination generally proved to us, that he had not spoken unadvisedly, nor without having deeply pondered the subject in his own mind. To gather around him an enquiring, thoughtful flock, not needing always to be fed with milk, but constantly striving after higher degrees of christian knowledge and maturity, was one object of his fervent desire. We have all need for humiliation, my dear friends, this night, that we have, in so poor a measure, improved our privileges, and given him cause for joy. How often has he warned and exhorted us, not to adopt any opinion merely because *he* asserted it, but to search the scriptures for ourselves, and see if these things were so. He had drank deeply at the fountain head himself, and

he earnestly directed us thither also, that we might be eminently taught of the Lord.

Qualifications such as those of our late minister, of course, singularly capacitated him for expounding those parts of Holy Writ, generally deemed unintelligible and abstruse. Whenever he undertook to explain a passage of dark and dubious import, he seemed to approach it, as it had been some ancient molten image of precious metal, so incrusted with the accumulated dust of ages, that neither form nor feature could be known. The plan which many in such a case would have taken, would have been at once to bedizen this form of mystery with the gaudy trappings of fancy, or the loose clothing of accommodation ; by which it might, in default of any apparent character of its own, have been made to assume any aspect that might be convenient or desirable. Not so our late pastor. He always appeared to commence his task under the full conviction, that if a passage were abstruse, it was not so of itself, but from corrupt tradition, mistranslation, or ill-formed

scholastic systems. He therefore began by first clearing off its disgraceful covering of soil and rubbish, till some general shape appeared to view ;—then he laboured till he had brought out some distinct and characteristic limb ; then the more minute and delicate features ;—until, when he wiped off the last coat of dust from its polished surface, the whole passage seemed to glow like burnished gold in the sunbeam, to the conviction, edification, and gratitude of his gladdened auditors.

Were I addressing those who had not *known* our late pastor, it might be needful here to state, lest they should mistake his character, that with all the elevated pleasure he himself found in scriptural investigations, and his desire that his people should engage in them too ; yet no man was more opposed to foolish questionings and vain janglings than was he. His enquiries were all of a serious nature, and conducted in a serious spirit ; and if he seemed occasionally to attach undue importance to little things, it was because he felt

that nothing could be really little, that pertained to the revelation of the Divine will.

A reference to the effect produced upon our young men, would easily show that this habit of Mr. E.'s mind had really a happy tendency. Entering as they have done, with all the ardour of youth, into many of their minister's views, and ready to the extent of their ability, to prosecute any enquiries he might suggest, it is delightful still to recollect, that their sweetest and holiest bond of fellowship has been the prayer meeting, conducted wholly amongst themselves, and to this day attended with gratifying regularity and spirit.

Although reference has been made to Mr. E.'s great excellence in the exposition of the more dark and hidden portions of sacred scripture, we well know that it was not *only* in passages of this order, that his ability as an expositor was remarkable; nor was this by any means his highest gift.

The same mode of treatment so happily adopted in the cases alluded to, was that which he also constantly applied to the more plain and generally accepted portions.

It was not sufficient with him, that this or that interpretation was the one upon which popular opinion had stamped its sanction ; but the simple question with him always was,— “ what is mind of the Holy Spirit in the passage now before me ?”

Seldom, if ever, was our minister known to cull out of the bible some peculiar expression, and in mere play upon its phraseology, without reference to the context, attempt to build or support a doctrine, or indulge in fanciful speculation. One part of his plan was, I think I may say invariably, (briefly or at large as the case might need,) to enquire, “ *to* whom and *by* whom was the declaration primarily made ? what direct import had it when first written or delivered ? and by what *analogy* can its literal meaning, or its hidden and spiritual lesson be applicable to ourselves ?”

Generally, therefore, his exposition of scripture served, not merely to illustrate the text itself, but to facilitate very materially, the just comprehension of its whole connexion. His preaching was *never* the heaping of the mere-

tricious ornaments of rhetoric or classic learning, upon the matchless form of heavenly truth ; his veneration for the word of God would not allow this. But his constant aim was to bring out its *own* native beauties,—its *own* energy,—its *own* instructive spirit ; and perhaps his finest talent was that of being able to place the various parts of divine revelation, in so just and happy a relative position, that spontaneous light beamed from their centre !

From the fact that our minister adopted, generally speaking, the *literal* rule of scripture interpretation, he was necessarily led to embrace views, on some subjects, differing widely from those of the great majority of his brethren in the ministry. This has been most remarkably the case on the subject of prophecy, and, less prominently indeed, in the system of philosophy he was led to espouse, known as Hutchinsonian ; although he by no means went the whole length of John Hutchinson.

Although he occasionally brought before us those subjects in a distinct discourse, yet his reference to them was more generally inci-

dental. His adoption of the literal sense of the sacred word gave, as we thought at least, an aspect of beautiful clearness and harmony to every doctrine and sentiment he uttered ; either in the plain and happy method of its illustration, or in the firm and appropriate position it was seen to occupy, in the one grand scheme of Eternal Mercy.

That old and well-worn theme, the Cross of Christ, was with him an untiring favourite. And never did he bring it out to view, but it displayed to us new beauties and higher charms. Yet he treated not even *this* subject, any more than any other part of Revelation, abstractedly and alone. The Bible was to him all harmony, and symmetry, and connection. To the counsels of the Eternal God, declaring himself in the economical character of the Triune Sworn Ones—the Great Elohim—he traced up every thing in creation, providence, and grace. Secured in the provisions of that vast scheme was, he firmly believed, the salvation of every believing sinner ; “ chosen in Christ before the foundation of the

world." You well recollect with what glowing energy our departed minister used to dwell upon the grand links of this chain of eternal mercy ; amongst which were often presented to us—the solemn events of paradise,—the Abrahamic covenant,—the simple sacrifice of the patriarchs,—the splendid worship of Jerusalem,—the voice of prophecy,—the atonement of Jesus,—the dispensation of the Spirit,—the times of the gentiles,—the concussion of nations,—the second advent of Messiah,—the first Resurrection,—and the Millenial glory !

Yea, to his favoured soul there seemed not a note of discord, in all that is past, and will yet succeed, from the speaking of that voice, which said, "Let there be light," and there was light, to the final "giving up of the kingdom to the Father, that God may be all in all."

Whether Mr. Eagleton excelled most as a doctrinal or practical preacher, it would be extremely difficult to decide. Sometimes, after one of those lucid statements of doctrinal truth with which we were often privileged, we were

inclined to affirm, that the highest pinnacle of his character was that of a sound divine. When at other times he directed us to the pages of unfulfilled prophecy, and so familiarly placed us amidst the scenes of the future, that we seemed already to behold the scattered tribes of Israel mustering out of every land for their march to the holy city, and to hear heaven's trumpet shrilly crying, "The coming of the Lord draweth nigh!"—*then* we were inclined to think that in *this* department he shone with most brilliancy and power. Yet, when again his subject led him to fathom the depths of christian experience; to describe the conflict of "the spirit lusting against the flesh, and the flesh lusting against the spirit," each one of us felt as if our minister had really looked into our bosom, and acquainted himself with every emotion that had passed within. How true to the life, how pleasing, how edifying, were those invaluable lectures on Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress. Surely, not an individual amongst us, from the father in Christ to the stripling or the babe, who

attended on such evenings, but felt whilst listening to those addresses, that he was enjoying a privilege of a very high order ; that he was receiving food for his soul. And no wonder, if at those times we decided that the *forte* of our preacher's talent was practical. The fact was, that in every department of the labours of an ambassador of Christ, he was “a workman that needed not to be ashamed.” The reason of his excellence in one department was also the cause of his superiority in another, and the same in all ; it was his careful and perpetual adherence to the word of God. It was this that gave him his advantage in all his doctrinal theories and sublime speculations ; and it was this, and this alone, which gave such power to those appeals, that often smote the sinner to the heart, and drove the self-righteous from his refuge of lies,—whilst it enabled him to comfort the feeble-minded, to confirm the wavering, and to reclaim such as were turned out of the way.

There was, in the earlier period of Mr. E.'s labours amongst us, one class of discourses,

which though not numerous, were too important to be omitted even in this brief retrospect. I allude to those inimitable expositions which he gave at a meeting which he instituted once a fortnight for the special benefit of young persons. On these occasions, he kindly undertook to illustrate and expound any subject in scripture or in experience, proposed to him beforehand, which from its seeming obscurity had formed an obstacle to the full apprehension of christian truth. Perhaps amongst the several queries which were then handed to him, the discussion of none caused a more high and grateful excitement than that of "*Jephthah's rash vow.*" Scarcely an individual of the hundreds who that evening crowded the school-room, will ever forget the thrill of elevated pleasure, which, on that interesting occasion, passed through every bosom.

If, however, a wish on my part could possibly obtain for me, copies of any one distinct portion of his labours, I know not whether I should be expressing the sentiments of my friends or not, but, methinks, my own choice

would fall on his brief but heavenly addresses to new members of the church, on their first admission to christian fellowship at the table of the Lord. Never, surely, has there fallen from uninspired lips, so much sweet and valuable instruction in so few words. How did his heart seem to burn with parental love, whilst pointing out to the young professor the enemies which he would now have to encounter,—the temptations which would now beset him,—and at the same time, the sufficiency of the grace of Jesus to enable him to keep his garments unspotted from the flesh, and having done all “to stand.” How was the tender conscience soothed by a reference to the memorials of a Saviour’s passion, and the eye of faith directed to the exhilarating anticipations of that blissful day when he shall “come a second time without sin unto salvation?”

The Lord’s supper was evidently to himself a season of great enjoyment; a fact which, in connection with the peculiarly appropriate views he was wont to hold forth of the gra-

cious ends of its institution, seldom failed to lead the souls of those to whom he ministered, to a clear and grateful participation in this, the most deeply interesting of all christian ordinances. Strikingly appropriate was it, that in the arrangements of divine providence, our Pastor was, in this impressive ordinance, unwittingly to take leave of his church ! Into his mouth might, on that occasion, have been put, the sacramental words of his adorable Master, “ I say unto you, I will not henceforth drink of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father’s kingdom.”

You would, I am sure, charge me with an unpardonable omission, if, in this little sketch of our late beloved pastor, I were not to mention his eminence in “ the grace of supplication.” His peculiar suitability, his edifying variety, and deep solemnity in prayer, very powerfully impressed us at his coming amongst us, and continued to be as remarkable in his last petition as his first. Whilst leading our devotional exercises, he seemed to stand as

in the very presence of Jehovah. Oh, what a sanctified assistance did we often find in the fine strain of his devotion, when, coming to the house of God with souls borne down by the cares and agitations of the world, we needed some such gracious help to raise them towards heaven !

Connected with this excellency, we may also refer to his superiority in the knowledge and practice of the true style of devotional singing, " His soul was tuned to sweetest harmony;" and whilst nothing was more grateful to him than solemnity and concord in this part of worship, nothing made him more wretched than the reverse. His efforts to improve the congregation in this respect have not been entirely lost, though very far from accomplishing all that he ardently desired.

Two distinct though kindred institutions, connected with our congregation, our dear minister was the sole means of originating ;— the Dorcas society, and the Provident union. He well knew that the best mode of exciting love between the members of a community,

was to induce them to blend together their talents and energies, in some common act of doing good ; and he wisely chose two schemes of operation, which, whilst they led to christian sociality on the one hand, afforded actual relief to the poor and the afflicted on the other. May these two institutions long stand amongst us, not only as monuments for the dead, but as pillars of hope to the living !

With respect to Mr. Eagleton's private habits, that he was a *hard* student, as well as a successful one, it required only a slight acquaintance with him to ascertain. When in health, the pulpit and the study divided nearly the whole of his time. In his weekly anticipations of the Sabbath engagements, he used to submit himself to a twofold preparation ; first of the head, then of the heart. To those who enjoyed particular intimacy with him, he used to say, that as intellectual productions merely, his sermons were generally quite prepared by the friday evening ; but that his object on the saturday chiefly was, by prayer and reflection, so to imbue his soul

with the spirit of his subjects, that he might speak to his people with heartfelt earnestness, and under a deep sense of the importance of the message he had to convey. How well he succeeded in acquiring the spirituality of mind he sought for, we, my friends, can truly testify, whose hearts have often burned within us, while he opened to us the scriptures.

It would have been gratifying to many, had our late minister taken a more forward part in the affairs of the several important societies for united christian effort, which signalize our day. More than one reason we know might be alleged for his not doing so. To say nothing of his incapacity for much physical activity, from the effects of a severe affliction earlier in life, Mr. Eagleton's mental qualities were not of that ready and pliant order, which would have enabled him to throw himself with rapidity from one kind of engagement to another. Every thing, with him, must be done calmly, thoughtfully, and seriously. For his own people, and the various interests of his own sanctuary, he planned and laboured con-

stantly and earnestly ; and it was to him no small trial to have his regular and measured habits interrupted and disarranged. Yet, still was he by no means indifferent to the progress of Evangelical effort either at home or abroad. It was an erroneous statement that we have sometimes heard, that his views on the fulfilment of prophecy hindered him from giving his sanction to Gospel missions. It is true, indeed, that he differed from many of his brethren, as to the precise motives to be urged in the advocacy of these exertions, and the exact work they were to accomplish, in the great plan of Heaven ; but well he knew that missionary labours were essential to the completion of that glorious plan ; and delighted to hear of their extension, and of their winning souls for Christ. Nor did he neglect to pray for their success, nor to exhort us to help forward this great work of the Lord.

The duties, however, of a Christian pastor, are so numerous and so varied, that it is almost fruitless to search for such a model of human perfection, as shall blamelessly fill

them all. To say that our late lamented minister combined in himself every human and christian excellence, that he had no faults which diminished his usefulness, and obscured occasionally the fair comeliness of his general character, would be an unfaithful and criminal statement ; and could *he* hear it, none would be more disgusted with it than himself. He well knew himself to be but an erring son of a degenerate race, the heir of many frailties ; and deemed it an act of surpassing grace, that his faulty earthen vessel should, in any degree, be made the depository of the treasures of the gospel, for the good of his fellow-sinners.

In the freedom with which we were used to converse with our late lamented minister, we never administered our gentle reproofs for any offence so often, as for his so seldom paying us a visit at our respective homes. For set parties, or assemblies for the mere exhibition of compliment and politeness, it was speedily discovered he was not the man. In no situation did he appear to such immense disadvan-

tage. Answering in some particulars to the description of character given of John the Baptist, he seemed not to lay aside the garment of camel's hair and the leathern girdle, even when he reluctantly entered the few polite parties into which mistaken friendship introduced him. His thoughts were engaged on other matters than the passing gossip of the locality or the times. But when, on the other hand, he was surrounded by a few friends, who, whether high or low, young or old, were inclined for rational and edifying communion, his conversation was interesting to a degree which those only who have enjoyed it can adequately conceive. It was then he opened up more of the various detail of those schemes of scriptural philosophy, and the fulfilment of prophecy, on which he often found it delightful to meditate, and of which he could give but a general and cursory exhibition in his more public discourses. For my own part, not a few such delightful seasons linger in my recollection ; and sure I am that this mere allusion will awaken in the hearts of

many who hear me, similar reminiscences ; and the only bitter drop that mingles with the retrospect, is the thought—that we can enjoy such seasons *no more.*

No more ! cheerless, sepulchral word ! How well we can sympathize, (forgetting the intermediate lapse of ages,) with that other afflicted church, who, in the farewell interview with their apostolic minister, “sorrowed most of all for the words which he spake unto them, that they should see his face no more.”

That wondrous power of bringing scripture to the interpretation of scripture, and causing its darkest places to shine out with heavenly radiance, —we shall assuredly witness no more ! Those simple, harmonious, instructive statements of the doctrines of sovereign grace,—those weighty sermons, those powerful appeals,—we must listen to no more ! Those spirit-stirring enquiries into the sublime words of Prophecy, that sent even the unlettered mechanic home to search his Bible for himself, either at his loom or in his scanty hours of leisure ;—those comprehensive and distinct

displays of the Great Plan of Heaven,—the product of days and nights of profound meditation,—must be ours no more ! He will preside at our several anniversary socialities, like a Father amid his family, no more ! By his sweetly tuned ear, in the direction of our songs of praise, and his fervent and solemn pleadings at a throne of grace,—we can benefit no more ! No more will he administer the faithful warning,—the oil of consolation,—the invitation,—the encouragement ;—he will expound to us the instructive mysteries of the Pilgrim's Progress, no more ! Never again will he break to us the bread, and pour out the wine,—and utter words so apostolic, that the mantle of Paul himself might seem that hour to rest upon his honoured person ; no, my fellow-members of a bereaved church, he will present to us the christian passover no more.

And now, my dear christian associates, what ought to be the effect of this afflictive dispensation of our heavenly Father upon ourselves ? Ought it to be, to excite each other to fretfulness and rebellion against the hand

that has smitten us? God forbid! Such would not have been the advice of the dear deceased. Rather would he have said, "Since ye avow that your past privileges have been great, be submissive, and be grateful; and since it has seemed good in the sight of Infinite Wisdom, to remove from you your teacher, therefore "give the more earnest heed to the things that ye *have* heard, lest at any time ye should let them slip." With a reference to these words, I commenced this engagement, and with none more appropriate can I conclude. I am sure that this service has been interesting to you, simply because your attention has been directed to the character and labours of one, whose ministry cannot fail to have formed a most interesting era in the life of every individual who may have attended it, and known its value.

If I have in any measure succeeded in depicting to your mental vision, the general outline of his features, I have no wish that this attempt should be immediately forgotten, because I think that it may be profitably

borne in mind. Though far, very far, from a *complete* delineation of his character, it may be of use in assisting you to recall, the more vividly, some of the heavenly truths he taught, and the holy duties he inculcated. And whenever memory shall, dove-like, bring into your soul's ark, a remaining branch, or a single leaf, sometime plucked from that fruitful and honoured tree, which lately flourished in the courts of our earthly sanctuary, but is now transplanted to the climate of heaven's own balmy summer,—then, whilst you hail with delight the welcome relic, let it not merely move you to drop a tear to the memory of him you mourn, or to ejaculate, “Peace to his honoured dust,”—but “to give the more earnest heed to those things which, *from his lips*, you have heard, lest at any time you should let them slip !”

THE
PROBABLE DESTINY
OF
GREAT BRITAIN,
A SERMON

PREACHED IN RAMSDEN-STREET CHAPEL, HUDDERSFIELD,
ON SUNDAY, DECEMBER 29TH, 1829.

BY JOHN EAGLETON.

HUDDERSFIELD ·
PRINTED BY H. ROEBUCK, KING-STREET.

—
1841.

A SERMON.

JER. V. 29.

SHALL I NOT VISIT FOR THESE THINGS? SAITH THE LORD
SHALL NOT MY SOUL BE AVENGED ON SUCH A NATION
AS THIS?

“A PRUDENT man foreseeth the evil and hideth himself; but the simple pass on and are punished.” These words may be found in the twenty-second and twenty-seventh chapters of the sententious sayings of the wise man Solomon. The passage, though short, is amazingly comprehensive, and in a few words embodies several great fundamentals, principles of first-rate importance to the active and responsible children of men. The words obviously imply, that, under the present dispensation of divine providence, the inhabitants of the world are assailed by evil in diversified forms. Indications, too,

of its approach in the various departments in which we are respectively engaged, are, it should seem, usually given by the governor of the universe, that the wise observers of his ways may shelter themselves from the storm. While, therefore, the thoughtless pass on and are punished, he who gives the signs of approaching evil, excites the prudent to throw the eye of contemplation over and around the tendencies of the times, and they, aware of the gathering clouds, learn, in some measure, what they ought to do. The magnitude of the calamity, or the specific form it will assume, it may not, in many cases, be possible for them to divine; nor is it in any case necessary: it is sufficient if they can trace the finger of God sketching some of the broader lines of his plan, and stand prepared for the plenary development of his will. This is attainable. To neglect the acquisition is folly. Common-sense individuals, unbiassed by educational prejudices and free from the shackles of arbitrary custom, without any formal recognition of the several principles to which we have adverted, really exemplify and prove their accuracy in all conditions of human life. Waving the extraordinary days in which mortal affairs being convulsed to their foundations, and the adventitious circumstances by which even in ordinary days, some are suddenly elevated from a cottage to a mansion, or hurled from a throne into a dungeon, generally speaking, we may perhaps affirm, that there is an intimate connexion between the prudence and elevation of one, and the degradation and imprudence of another.

Nor will it be denied, we presume, that prudence is mainly concerned in the foresight of evil and provision against it; while ignorance of its approach and an habitual pursuit of those measures which cannot fail to aggravate it when it comes, is the consummation of human folly. The extraordinary successes of some commercial men, military leaders, and revered legislators, are but so many illustrations, so many proofs of this part of the passage, "A prudent man foreseth an evil and hideth himself." The extraordinary failures on the other hand of many toiling merchants and manufacturers, brave commanders and generals, and of politicians most profound, are so many illustrations, so many proofs of the other part of the passage, "the simple pass on and are punished." By foreseeing an evil and providing against it, commercial establishments, formidable armies and political enterprises have been saved from dreaded ruin; while establishments most reputable, armies most powerful, and schemes of policy fraught with intelligence and efficiency have been swallowed up in an instant, because an evil, of whose approach there were indications indeed, but indications totally disregarded, came suddenly upon them, at an hour when they looked not for it.

While enterprising merchants, victorious generals, and profound politicians, usually effect their most brilliant designs by foreseeing evils and hiding themselves; may we not deem it somewhat strange, that the very men who recognize and exemplify this prudence in their ordinary procedure, though they move in various and opposite di-

rections, should show a determined aversion to those who would in the same manner seek the welfare and glory of their king and their country? If in the several departments of the affairs of a nation, the agricultural, the commercial, the military, the foresight of evil is essential to prudence, why should the foresight of an evil equally affecting the whole, be treated as is too commonly the case, as a prophetic mania, and the madness of impious presumption? Multitudes, I am aware, associate with a vague idea of the superintending providence of heaven over the nations of the earth, the ridiculous supposition that divine providence concerns not it-self with the trivial affairs of families and individuals. The rise and fall of empires they imagine may be under the direction and control of the Supreme Ruler, but he cannot stoop, they think, to behold the affairs and movements of the lesser tribes of men in their respective callings. Hence they conclude that while watchfulness and care and exertion in our individual concerns, from which they have precluded the interference of providence, is highly becoming, they presume that quiescent insensibility is our duty with regard to the destiny of the nation. But is there not an unaccountable inconsistency in admitting the verity of divine providence over empires, while we question its relation to individuals? Can we conceive a government of the whole in contradistinction to the government of the parts of which the whole is composed? If empires flourish or decay under the frowns or smiles of heaven, why not the commerce, the agri-

culture, the political economy of empires? It is, in fact, because the commerce, the agriculture, the cabinet of a nation are not abandoned to chance, but under the management of a providence, that institutes a connexion between causes and effects, adapted to the exercise of the rational powers of accountable beings, that we can foresee the evil which is likely to assail us in our several avocations and provide against the threatening calamity; and, therefore, by the same kind of prudence, we may foresee and provide against a national calamity under the same divine administration. So certainly, then, as we can calculate the probable embarrassment or success of our political measures, our military movements, and our commercial transactions, let us be assured that the probable destiny of the nation, as a whole, may be ascertained without incurring either the charge of rashness or impious intrusion into the counsels of heaven. Indeed, it is much more easy to form an estimate of the whole than of a part. By how much the fall of an empire exceeds in magnitude and importance the subversion of its commerce, the defeat of its army, or the confusion of its counsels, by so much will the indications of its approaching ruin exceed in perspicuity.

Brethren, we shall stand or fall. Why not inquire whether? The eye of the prudent may trace the signs of the times. If they be such as indicate the perpetuation of our national glory with radiance strong and clear, let us rejoice in the prospect. If they be ominous of our fall, let us hear the rod, know him that has ap-

pointed it, and prepare to meet our God. By shutting our eyes and crying peace, peace, we cannot escape the evil which we refuse to see; we may involve ourselves in a sudden destruction from which an angel-arm cannot extricate the infatuated slumberer. Unhallowed curiosity, however, we decry. We only wish to awaken you, my dear brethren, to a due consideration of the signs of Great Britain's destiny. To no extraordinary skill in the selection or deciphering of these signs do we pretend. The modern prophets, as they are contemptuously called, who foresee by the light of heaven's revelation the approaching evil to which the finger of providence directs their eye, have not, that I am aware, made any new discoveries, but zealously called the attention of Britons to objects with which our predecessors were familiar, and which our contemporaries seem determined to bury in oblivion. The cry of novelty, extravagance, heretical innovations, is heard, indeed, as explanatory of the motives by which they are actuated, and for the most part the sincerity of our opponents is not to be questioned: they verily believe that the statements made by the sacred prophets are novelties, extravagancies, innovations. It does not hence follow that they are such. Though Wickliffe in England, Luther in Germany, and Calvin in Geneva, were considered by papal christendom as setters forth of unheard-of novelties and damnable heresies, they proposed no new gospel to the acceptance of mankind, but the old, even that which was from the beginning. So, brethren, now

we preach to you the second advent of the Lord Jesus Christ, we merely reverberate the ancient gospel in the accents of the Son of God himself, “Behold the Bridegroom cometh, go ye forth to meet him.” In this particular we follow the example of that prince of philosophers, Sir Isaac Newton; we tread in the steps of protestant bishops Newton, Horsley and others, and scholars most profound, christians most devoted, both clergy and laity of all the reformed churches, Episcopal, Presbyterian, and Independent, are our guides under the direction of the word of God.* Illumined with their light, and strengthened with their strength, we will venture this evening to poise the balances of the sanctuary and weigh the apprehensions of Great Britain, that we may ascertain, if possible, the probable destiny of our beloved country. It will appear from this experiment, if I mistake not, that though England, mercifully dealt with amidst the convulsions of empire and the wreck of nations, may survive yet other convulsions

* Nothing can be more disingenuous than the attempt of our opponents to induce the christian world to believe, that the modern students of the sacred page of prophecy, are inflated with new fancies, because they testify of the judgments that will precede the latter day glory, and of the personal manifestation of the Lord Jesus. Names the most dear to the Church, alike respectable for piety, talent, and number, are familiar to the students of prophecy, with which also we wish our inconsiderate accusers would cultivate an extensive acquaintance and supersede the necessity of our smaller productions. They did not indeed agree in every iota respecting the scheme or the sense of prophecy, nor the personal reign of the Son of God; nor do the moderns; and neither they nor we wish to make creeds for others, but to induce christians to examine for themselves the sure word of prophecy, that light which shines in a dark place.

and stand amidst other wrecks: England, having suffered and still suffering, will suffer yet greater things than these, and, if preserved awhile, to do much in filling up the plan of God's providence, will nevertheless ultimately fall, more gently, perhaps, than some of those nations which have already been shaken and overthrown, but yet are reserved unto the day of wrath, but with them, I fear, we shall fall at length, and fall ——. Let us anticipate no longer. Let us proceed to notice five sources of evidence that Jehovah will visit us for our sins, and avenge his soul on such a nation as this. The general doctrine of divine providence contained in the holy scripture—the torpid insensibility of our land to her danger—the manner in which the present dispensation is to be terminated—the imperial territory on which the judgments of heaven will fall—and the character of the nations that will perish in that day, are so many weights, each of which alone draws the balance to probability, and all of them combined to little short of moral certainty.

I. The destiny of nations, is, according to the holy scriptures, in the hand of divine providence. God himself is the supreme governor of the universe, and by him only kings reign and princes decree judgment. Crowns and sceptres and thrones are at his disposal whose kingdom ruleth over all. He rules not, however, with arbitrary and despotic sway, but as becometh the monarch of the universe, the sovereign of angels and men; and though clouds and darkness are round about

him, rectitude and judgment are the bases of his throne. According to his plan of government righteousness exalts a nation, while sin involves it in ruin and reproach. For this end, God, in his providence, considers a nation in some sort comparable to an individual. Its origination is its birth—its people so many members of one body politic—its rulers are the head—its commerce the life-blood of its veins—the system of policy by which its movements are regulated is its soul: it passes through the several stages of infancy and youth, manhood and prime, decline, decrepitude and old age. Having lived the years appointed for the duration of its life, its glory departs, its spirit evaporates, and it dies the death appointed for all living, and is no more found among the kingdoms of the earth. Hence, also, it seems that divine providence usually deals with nations as with individuals, so far, at least, as may comport with the perfections of Deity. Kingdoms, like individuals, sometimes expire in their infancy, sometimes in a good old age, while many fall by an unexpected and violent blow, in all their glory and their prime. All, however, in their proper order, like the sons and daughters of Adam, who have the number of days appointed them beyond which they cannot pass, hear, at length, the dread command, “Return, ye children of men.” If then, Great Britain be not made an exception to the accustomed ways of providence, *her final fall may be apprehended.* As I, a mortal man, cannot look for exemption from the stroke of mortality, so neither can England, a

kingdom of this changing world, expect to stand for ever. In the fall of other nations it is probable we behold a pattern and pledge of the fall of our own.

I mean not, however, by this statement, to indicate that because the nations of the earth have hitherto all expired, that therefore all the nations that are now on the earth must surely cease to be. That kind of logic which makes past events the premises from which we may deduce infallible conclusions respecting the future, if not in all cases fallacious, is at least so, when we discourse of human contingencies and the unfrustrable purposes of God, and by no means to be employed to explain the boundless scheme of eternal providence. A brighter dispensation, another and a better economy, a new order of things in which death itself shall be done away and bodies part no more, is presented to the expectant eye of hope through the vista of prophecy. And long before that perfect day, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven, to be glorified in his saints and admired in them that believe, those of his people who shall be alive at his coming shall never die, but be changed in a moment from mortal to immortal forms, and share in the glory of his kingdom. Many nations too, existing at the coming of the Lord, will survive and escape the horrors of the day, and learn from the wonders he will do that he is Jehovah. But though we may not reason thus, that which has been must be again, we may say, that that which has been may be again, unless a change of circumstances renders

it impossible. Nay, more, we ought to believe that that which has hitherto uniformly transpired, will probably transpire again, while the same dispensation, the same economy, the same order of things remains. Hitherto the mightiest empires founded by man, have waxed old and ceased to be, nor can we reasonably dream of any other end for Old England. Who are we, and what were our ancestors that our duration should know no period !

Britons, survey the map of empire. Mark the desolations which have succeeded to more than British splendour. Where is the proud Assyrian empire that stood on the banks of the Tygris ? Where the impious Chaldean empire which gloried in the streams of Euphrates ? Where the Persian whose power extended from the Indus to the Mediterranean ? Where the Grecian whose name diffused terror to the ends of the earth ? Where the warlike and daring states of the Philistines, the commercial republics of Phoenicia, Ninevah with her ramparts, Babylon with her impregnable walls, Persipolis with her palaces, Balbeck with her temples, Tyre and her fleets, Sidon and her manufactories,—all, all have been swept away with the besom of destruction, while temples thrown down, palaces demolished, cities destroyed to the foundations, lands stripped of their inhabitants, crushed thrones, broken sceptres, insulted crowns and exiled monarchs proclaim, “ Verily there is a reward for the righteous, verily there is a God that

judgeth in the earth!" And who art thou, O Great Britain, that thou shouldest escape? Are there no God-provoking sins in the land to which the finger of insulted heaven points, while righteous indignation thunders in our ears, "Shall I not visit for these things? Shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this?" O England! England! pride not thyself in thy imaginary greatness! Indulge not, my beloved country, the illusory hope that thou art a queen which shall never see sorrow! Already thy beauty is fading! Already thy strength is failing! Thy crown shorn of its lustre, thy sceptre stripped of its majesty, thy throne dishonoured by rebellious children, evince the departure of thy beauty, and the failure of thy strength. Already thy head reels with distraction! Already thy eyes are dim with weeping! Thy counsels turned into foolishness, thine authority trampled under foot, thy servants unfaithful to their charge, account for thy distraction and justify thy tears. Thy mighty energies are paralyzed. Thy warmest affections are chilled. The commercial stream, the life-blood of thy whole body politic, flows irregularly, and the slow full beat of thy heart, threatens stagnation—torpor—death.

II. *British experience at this moment supplies the

* This article was omitted in the delivery on account of time, and because the substance of it had been recently stated in a lecture on the signs of the times. It is proper, however, that it should appear in this place, for the completion of the plan of the discourse, and for its important aspect on the probable destiny of our land. This note I deem necessary for the information of those who heard the sermon.

place of proof with regard to the facts of the case at which we have been glancing. In proposing therefore the insensibility of Great Britain to her imminent danger, as a second source of evidence that her future fall is probable, we have not the most distant design to suggest that England knows not nor feels her present distress. The whole head is sick and the whole heart is faint : from the crown of the head to the sole of the foot she is full of wounds and bruises and putrifying sores, neither bound up nor mollified with ointment. England never felt more sensibly than now she feels, how much a mighty nation may endure, and yet maintain an erect and dignified position among the nations of the earth. Hunger and nakedness are the portion of her pauperised population, whose abject condition moves the inefficient sympathies of myriads around them. The heads of houses, who but lately basked in the beams of prosperity and exulted in their multiplied and growing progeny, now tremble on the precipice of bankruptcy, reiterating sighs of dismal and undefinable apprehension. In the mansions of her nobility, in the chambers of her national council, in the palace, in the heart of the sovereign of an afflicted nation, I cannot but believe, that lively emotions of sensibility are realized, which would excite them at once to terminate the sorrows of the country, if they knew the way in which it might be done. But the disease is so deeply rooted, and so complicated, that the utmost skill is baffled and every antidote nullified.

There is, nevertheless, a national insensibility generally prevalent which is highly provoking to God, and which did not characterize Great Britain in former years. We do not hear the rod, or know the hand that strikes. Although the Lord God of Hosts calls us to weeping and to mourning, and to baldness, and to girding with sackcloth ; behold, joy and gladness, slaying oxen, and killing sheep, eating flesh and drinking wine, is the employ of Britons, who like the stupid Jews, reverse the order of things, and say, “ Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we shall die.” Here is the true cause of the perpetuation of British woe. Averse to the salutary discipline of repentance before God, we choose to speak evil of dignities, to reproach the merchant and the manufacturer, to lay the blame any where and every where, rather than sigh and cry for the abominations of the land. Let the sovereign and his nobles, the senators and the judges, the priests and the people, weep before the Lord between the porch and the altar, and in defiance of the scepticism of the age, the frivolous spirit and manners of the times, prove the Sovereign disposer of all human affairs, as our forefathers were wont to do, and see if he will not send us blessings till we have not room to contain them. Prostration before the Almighty is the position that becomes us. This is the only common ground on which the divided people of these realms can meet. Here let them meet and meet again, till the radiant beams of Jehovah’s glory melt them into one, and then Britain

shall arise from the dust, the throne of her king shall be established in righteousness, and her children rejoice in the abundance of peace and prosperity.

Few, I fear, will listen to accents like these. The departure of the spirit of devotion from our churches; the hope indulged by our rulers that the evils of the land will destroy each other, or that in the depth of their counsels they shall discover an efficient remedy for our chief complaints; above all the indulgence, the increasing indulgence shown by all parties and classes among us to that child of infidelity, the separation of religious and civil affairs, fills me with fear. If, however, the trumpet is not blown in Zion and the solemn assembly called; if the people will not hear and humble themselves under the mighty hand of God that he may exalt us in due time, then, I fear, he will frustrate all our counsels and make our diviners mad. When his chosen people refused him this penitential homage, it was revealed in the ears of the prophet Isaiah, by the **LORD** of Hosts, Surely this iniquity shall not be purged from you till ye die. Saith he not to us, as well as to them, "Shall I not visit for these things? saith the **LORD**: Shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this?" No substantial, no permanent relief can come to our land but by the interposition of divine providence. A national acknowledgment of our dependence on that providence, Jehovah demands at our hands. If we refuse to see his uplifted arm, to hear his warning voice, and bow before his sovereign throne,

will he not pour forth the whole contents of the vial of his wrath ? If we continue, by our political measures, our commercial contrivances, and our agricultural schemes, to testify in the face of heaven itself that we determine to stand, not only without but in opposition to his providence, will not the **Lord** make the land empty and waste, turn it upside down and scatter the inhabitants thereof ? If the nation after all, virtually deny providence, and instead of referring ourselves to God who is above, we look to second causes and expect deliverance from them ; if instead of acknowledging the sins of the body politic, we continue to rail against the king and the government, the church and the clergy, merchants, manufacturers, and landholders* ; if instead of seeking redress at the footstool of mercy we goad on our rulers to attempt what is the work of God only, it is to be feared, that it will be as with the people, so with the priest ; as with the servant, so with his master ; as with the maid, so with her mistress ; as with

* I would not be understood to teach by such passages as this, that all the higher branches of society are pure and perfect, while the great mass of the population alone is guilty. I would, however, definitively convey the idea, that whatever be the sins of any circle of the British people, our salvation will not come from the abuse of one class by another class. Every class is guilty. Every class needs reformation. The Radicals need repentance as well as the Boroughmongers. And except Cobbett and his followers repent as well as those to whose charge they lay all the sufferings of the land, they shall all likewise perish. Even the poor operatives that are perishing for want, must or ought to be aware, that the instruments of their ruin, of which they so bitterly complain, are the fruits of their own crimes. Masters have been goaded by the neglect and extortion of their men, in times of good trade, to render themselves less dependant by the use of machinery.

the buyer, so with the seller ; as with the lender, so with the borrower ; as with the taker of usury, so with the giver of usury to him ; yea, the land shall be utterly emptied and utterly spoiled ; for the **LORD** hath spoken this word, saying, “Cursed is man that trusteth in man, and that maketh flesh his arm, whose heart departeth from the **LORD** :” and on the authority of this word may it not be affirmed, that our national insensibility to our national dependance upon God, awfully indicates the probability of our national fall ?

III. The ordinary signs of the decline and fall of an empire, seldom awaken the solicitudes or apprehensions of the people, because, for the most part, those who live in affluence and luxury endeavour to conceal them, and amuse the suffering population with diversified experiments to restore the lost vigour of the state. This political quackery begins, however, to excite the contempt of the intelligent part of the British community : and were they not misled by some popular errors of a theological description, they would be aware of the extreme danger of the kingdom, and apply themselves to the promotion of the national welfare, by promoting national reform, without which no reform either in parliament or the church can benefit the land. Very generally there prevails in the religious class of British subjects, to which I here refer, a vague and indefinite idea, that the latter day glory is near, if it does not already dawn ; and that the nations of the earth will pass by a gradual and improving process from their present

state of mingled light and darkness, bliss and woe, purity and sin, to all the effulgence, sanctity and blessedness of millennial day, the sabbatism of the world. If not before that happy time, then, at least, it is hoped and believed that Great Britain's children will all be righteous, and rejoice in the munificence of heaven. With such a prospect, many patiently endure their present ills, and, instead of combining their energies to effect a national reform, wait for emancipation by the introduction of those better and more glorious times.

My dear brethren, the latter-day-glory is near. You do well to suffer patiently with that day in prospect. But is it not an illusion pregnant with pernicious consequences, to look for a gradual and improving process to introduce that day? Is it not manifest from the oracles of God, that the present, like the Jewish dispensation, will be terminated by judgments—judgments proportioned in magnitude and severity to the privileges which we have possessed, and the guilt we have accumulated, by the neglect and abuse of these privileges? Before the thundering harmony of that chorus, "Hallelujah! Hallelujah! for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth; the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and his Christ"—shall make the heavens and earth resound with joy; the vials of divine wrath must be poured out upon the nations of Christendom, and the seven last plagues be inflicted upon the rebellious children of men. Take the Bible in your hands and see, if, in every chapter, devoted to unfold the

glories of that time, when all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of God, it is not distinctly stated, that the day of the Lord, the latter-day-glory, cometh with clouds and gloominess, burning as an oven, before which all the proud and them that do wickedly, shall be as stubble, and utterly consumed both root and branch. Multitudes of passages will easily be collected, in which you will find this truth stated with so much perspicuity and force, that you will wonder you have not been familiar with the subject from your childhood.*

A few examples, from the multitude of passages to which we appeal, will be sufficient to convince you, that the manifold judgments which will precede the latter-day glory, will be the most awful in kind, the most overwhelming in degree, that have ever fallen, or ever shall fall upon this guilty world. You will find in the perusal of such texts, that the overspreading deluge of water supplied from the fountains of the abyss and

* It may be of some use to remark, for the sake of those, who like the noble Bereans, resolve to search the Scriptures daily, to see if these things be so, that almost all the texts, commonly referred to the last judgment, relate in fact, to the beginning of the latter-day-glory; and, in this view, they will be found plain, common-sense passages, while, in the other, they remain inexplicable. Examine, as specimens, Ps. ii.—ex. Isa. xxiv—xxxiv—lxiii. Jer. xxv. Joel ii—iii. Zech. xii—xiv. (Rev. vi—xvii—xix.) Matt. xxiv—xxv. Luke xvii—xxi.

See Bp. Horsley's Biblical Criticisms, and his Notes on the Psalms. Bp. Newton and Sir Isaac Newton on the Prophecies. Scriptural Expectations of the Christian Church, by Basilicus. The Times of the Gentiles, by H. Mc' Niel. Irving's Babylon and Infidelity Foredoomed. Ben Ezra's Coming of Messiah in Glory and Majesty. Illustrations of Prophecy, published, &c. by Mr. Vint.

poured through the windows of heaven—the torrents of fire and brimstone rained from the Lord out of heaven upon Sodom and Gomorrha and the cities of the plain—the plagues wherewith the Lord plagued Pharaoh and the idolatrous Egyptians—the desolations wherewith the Lord destroyed the guilty Canaanites and their kings—the sword, the pestilence, and the famine, the fire, the slaughter, and the barbarity, the prodigies, the horrors, the furious rage with which Judea, Jerusalem, the temple have been destroyed and the seed of Abraham pursued from nation to nation, are all but so many types of the more tremendous judgments which, during the midnight preceding the rise of the Sun of Righteousness and the dawn of millennial day, will visit the nations. And if the pictures were dreadful beyond description, too horrible to be conceived, what will the realities be! No tongue can tell, no imagination can realize, the contents of that cup the dregs of which must be drunken. There shall be great tribulation, such as was not from the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days should be shortened there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened. Well, therefore, may the Holy Ghost exclaim by the prophet, “Howl ye, for the day of the Lord is at hand; it shall come as a destruction from the Almighty.”

The time of visitation or the hour in which these judgments will be inflicted is so clearly ascertained, so definitely fixed in the texts themselves, that it must be

manifest to all who read, excepting those who will not see. I refer not, however, to the chronological date of the time of the judgments, the day or hour, of which I know not nor seek to know; but to the relative position of the period in which the nations are destined to drink of the wine-cup of wrath to the very dregs. It is not, you will see, the last great day for which all other days were made. Many particulars will occur in the statements, both of the old and new testaments, which by no critical dexterity, can be even accommodated to, or spiritualized concerning the day of final doom. In that day the Lord will come to Zion to turn away ungodliness from Jacob. In that day the kingdoms of this world will become the kingdoms of the Lord Christ and all nations shall serve him—then the word of the Lord shall go forth from Jerusalem as a lamp that burneth, and salvation to the ends of the earth—then the glory of the Lord will be revealed and all flesh shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it—then the Lord comes with fire and with his chariots like a whirlwind, to render his anger with fury and his rebukes with flames of fire—when by fire and by his sword the Lord will plead with all flesh, and the slain of the Lord shall be many—then will he set a sign among all nations, and send those that escape the judgments of the day, to Tarshish, Pul and Lud that draw the bow, to Tubal and Javan, and to the isles afar off, that have not heard his fame neither have seen his glory. These and many other particulars connected with the

day of the Lord, show, plainly enough, that anterior to the renewal of the world in righteousness, the revelation of the righteous judgment of God will lighten the earth with his glory and cover his enemies with terror.

From the judgments that are coming upon the sons of men, some of the nations, it is not to be questioned, will be exempted. How general soever the terms employed may be, by which the tribulations of the day of the Lord are described, it will be apparent to every careful reader of the sacred page, that they are not absolutely universal. While this consideration still further proves, that the final judgment of the universe is not intended, it suggests the important inquiry, Which of the nations will be the victims immolated in that day on the altar of divine justice? Can it be made to appear, think you, from the numerous texts that relate to these things, that any of the nations within the circumference of Christendom will be happy exceptions? The language of scripture, you are perhaps aware, is, very frequently at least, conformable to the idea, that our globe is, in some sort, analogous to the human body. That in this view Judea is called the heart of the earth seems obvious. That the nations surrounding Judea, and whose history is interwoven therewith, are regarded as the trunk of the body, and, therefore, emphatically called the earth, the world, is easily conceived. And by the same rule, other and far distant lands are called the ends of the earth, and the extremi-

ties of the earth, besides which we read of the isles, the isles afar off, and the isles beyond the seas. Hence it may be fairly inferred, and the inference might be proved to be correct by unequivocal testimonies from the sacred oracles, that the desolating judgments which will precede the latter-day glory, will not be universal. Many nations will be reserved to hear of all the good that the Lord God will do in that day for the seed of Abraham and them that fear the God of Abraham. Will England be one of these or those? Will England be destroyed with those that will be destroyed, or reserved with those that shall be reserved? O! delicate and important question! mysterious and interesting problem! a question we might not roundly answer if we could! a problem that we could not solve if we might! It must suffice to say, what faithfulness to the truth and patriotism sincere impels us to say, that no explicit exception in favour of Great Britain can be traced in these denunciations. Yea, rather, the descriptions, though not universal, are nevertheless so general and comprehensive, and withal so particular and determinate, that every one who cordially believes the scriptures, and loves his country too, must fear at least, that Great Britain is involved in the denunciation of the prophets. The twenty-fifth chapter of the prophet Jeremiah, which contains an epitome of the scheme of righteous wrath to be consummated in the last days, strengthens exceedingly our apprehension of Great Britain's fall. The prophet is commanded to present

the cup of wrath to all the nations to which the Lord will send him. These, saith the prophet, were all the kingdoms of the world upon the face of the earth. From nation to nation ; from one end of the earth to the other end of the earth ; to all the inhabitants of the earth ; to all flesh with whom the Lord will plead ; and to the isles beyond the sea, the commission extends. By what rule then shall England escape ? Whither, my country, wilt thou direct an expectant eye ? Humble thyself in the dust, and clothe thyself with sack-cloth ; cry mightily to God and turn from every evil way ; for who can tell if God will turn and repent, and turn away from his fierce anger, that we perish not.

IV. Were I anxious, my brethren, to prove, that, with Babylon and Infidelity, Great Britain is certainly foredoomed by heaven's unfrustrable decree, I might be induced to assert, that from the premises already laid down, the conclusion must inevitably follow. With a heart, however, disposed to exclaim in fervent prayer to God, " O ! that England might live before thee," I feel ready to allow that for which some will contend, viz., that the preceding premises are of a character somewhat too vague to afford a legitimate and unequivocal conclusion with regard to the certain destiny of our land. All I affirm is, that our utter subversion in the day of the Lord Jesus seems probable. And the probability of our final fall will be corroborated and increased by the fourth weight of apprehension which we must now throw into the balance. To illustrate

this article we refer you to Nebuchadnezzar's vision of the compound metallic image, and the prophet's interpretation, recorded in the second chapter of the book of Daniel; to the prophet's vision of the four great beasts, and the angel's interpretation, written in the seventh chapter of the book of Daniel; together with the amplification of these matters by the symbolical beasts in the Apocalypse.

All, or nearly all our commentators of allowed celebrity, agree that the succession of empires symbolized in the colossal image presented to the view of the great king, by the four metals, viz., the gold, the silver, the brass, and the iron, was that of the Babylonian, the Medo-Persian, the Grecian, and the Roman empires, and that the same succession of empires was symbolized by the four great beasts in the vision of the prophet Daniel. Ben-Ezra, however, in the work on the prophecies, called, "The Coming of Messiah in Glory and Majesty," translated from the Spanish by the Rev. E. Irving, M.A., gives a different division of the empires symbolized in the image, and a new application of the symbolical beasts of Daniel, worthy the profound consideration of all who are anxious to enter into the mind of the Spirit in the sacred scriptures. But so far as we are now concerned with these texts, I may, nevertheless, be allowed to assert, that our progress is by no means impeded. Whether Ben-Ezra or his predecessor be the more correct, or whether the whole truth is among them or remains to be discovered, England

may be one of the ten toes of the image, one of the ten horns of the fourth beast, one of the ten horns, or kings, or kingdoms of the Apocalypse. In the view of our most profound expositors, not excepting Sir Isaac Newton, Bishop Newton, and the very learned and godly Joseph Mede, Great Britain is one of the ten nations pointed at in these prophetic symbols. But these toes are to be ground to powder, these horns are to be broken in pieces, these kings or kingdoms are to be destroyed prior to the establishment of that kingdom which is to comprehend all nations and stand for ever and ever. The probability, then, of our national overthrow at the coming of the Lord is proportionable to that of being one of the toes, one of the horns, one of the kingdoms. And the probability of our being one of the toes, one of the horns, one of the kingdoms, is proportionable to the probability that Sir Isaac Newton, Bishop Newton, Joseph Mede, and a numerous train beside, are right with regard to the great outlines of prophecy. That they are all incorrect in some things, many of them in many things, we cannot doubt; but so much the more likely are they to be right in this particular in which they all agree; nor am I aware that any adequate hand has ever attempted to show that they are not. And, yet, that they were certainly correct in this point I will not affirm; but, that they were very probably so, who will have the audacity to deny. O! how probable, then, is thy fall, Great Britain!

Let us now suppose some extraordinary intelligence

to arise in mortal form, a spirit clothed with flesh and blood, whose unequalled powers should shine those of our Newtons, our Horsleys, and our Medes into tenfold darkness. Let this extraordinary intelligence, this spirit of prodigious powers, show by luminous exposition, prove by irrefragable arguments, demonstrate by invincible evidence, that Britain is not one of the toes of the image, not one of the horns of the beast, not one of the ten kingdoms of the Apocalypse, still, the probability that England is denounced in these scriptures may be fairly maintained. For it is clear from the passages themselves, that none of the empires symbolized in the visions they record, are as yet wholly exterminated and utterly destroyed. 'The proud boast of infidelity that the vestiges at least, of the old empires remain, and that formidable kingdoms may rise out of their ancient ruins, by no means affects the inspiration of the prophets. Every part of the colossal image will be found in being at the day of visitation, and the gold and the silver, the brass and the iron, and the clay will be ground to powder together, and scattered like chaff before the winds. The beasts exhibited in vision to Daniel will all be living when the thrones of Messiah's kingdom shall be set up, and the Ancient of days shall sit for judgment; and even after the fourth beast is slain and his body destroyed and given to the burning flame, the rest of the beasts, though deprived of their dominion, will have their lives prolonged for a season and a time. In the revelation to John you

shall find nothing contradictory, but much that is illustrative of those true sayings of God. Many other nations, then, besides the ten emphatic and distinguished kingdoms will be brought forth to destruction at that great day of the Lord. The whole territorial extent of Chaldea, Media, Persia, Greece, and Rome, is comprehended in the visions, and will be the scene of righteous vengeance. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but one iota of the word of God shall not fail. And so surely as the scriptures cannot be broken, they shall be fulfilled to the very letter, in the destiny of those nations, in which they have been but partially accomplished in former dispensations of wrath. And now can Great Britain prove that she is not included within this wide extended circumference? Is it not probable, I will not say demonstrable, but is it not at least very probable that Great Britain is a portion of the territory here denounced? Must it not also appear, that the probability of our final fall, is proportionable to the probability that England is a part of the imperial territory symbolized by the image in the second chapter of Daniel? O! how probable then is thy fall Great Britain!

In fine, I see not that Great Britain's just cause for apprehension would be removed, even by demonstrating that our land is no portion of the imperial territory, symbolized by the several metals of the image or the various beasts which appeared in vision to Daniel and John. It is too obvious from the page of prophecy, to

be questioned by any who examine and believe the true sayings of God, that many other nations will be associated with these in a formidable confederacy against God's Anointed-one. One of the grand designs to be answered by the coming of the Lord is to destroy the man of sin, the anti-christian combination, and all descriptions of men who may enter into league with the infidel power.* Terms and phrases, therefore, so comprehensive are employed, and withal so descriptive of the nations that will perish when the Lord appears, that the utmost dexterity of critical skill will not, I fear, be able to rescue England in the day of slaughter in the valley of decision†. Perhaps all the nations that have been favoured with the glorious gospel of the blessed God may be included. This, at least, is certain, that the infidel confederacy will rise out of an apostacy, and the apostacy, of course, must be exemplified in a people

* 2 Thess. ii. 1—12. Dan. vii. 9—14. Rev. xvi. 12—17—xvii. 12—14.
2 Thess. i. 7, 8.

† Joel ii. 1—11. Zeph. i. 14—18. Isa. xlvi. 13, 14.—lxvi. 5—16. 2 Thess. i. 6—10. Zeph. iii. 8. Mal. iv. 1. Hag. ii. 22. Joel iii. 1—15, Isa. xiii. 9—13. Isa. xxiv. 1—23. Isa. xxviii. 22. Mic. iv. 11—13. Zach. xii. 2—9.—xv. 2, 3, 12—14. Gen. xxv. 15—38.

See these and many other passages quoted and compared with much accuracy in J. A. Begg's *Speedy Return of Christ in Glory, and Millennial Reign on Earth*. This little work, consisting chiefly of the Holy Scriptures arranged under several heads, with explanatory remarks, I sincerely recommend to all who wish to form their creed on the word of God. The excellent author of this work, like the rest of us, is liable to mistakes, and to me it seems that he is mistaken with most of the modern students of prophecy in confounding the event pourtrayed in Ezek. xxxviii and xxxix, with the battle of Armageddon or the judgments that will attend the coming of the Lord.

professing the truth as it is in Jesus. Nor have we, that I recollect, any intimation given that a single nation, which has assumed the title of christian, will maintain that title in the day of general defection. Individual christians, no doubt, there will be in every place where the gospel has been made the power of God to salvation, who, when the Lord shall come, will be found faithful, and enter into the glory of his kingdom; but it does not appear, I presume, that any nation as such, will sustain this character, or even pretend to sustain it: yea, rather, all the nations, it should seem, that have borne the christian name, will bear the name and rally round the standard of anti-christ.*

To those who are little conversant with creature dependence, who erroneously suppose that a nation so enlightened with the gospel, as ours, is almost morally incapable of disowning the Saviour, sentiments like these, will not only be unwelcome, but treated with indignant contempt. So much the more, it may hereafter be apparent, Great Britain has cause to tremble now. What sin so soon provokes the Lord to withhold the dews of heavenly grace or withdraw the enlivening rays of the Sun of righteousness, as the sin of self-sufficiency? Without these heavenly influences what would our churches, our institutions, our nation, become in a single generation? Are our graces, our talents, our moral energies hereditary? O England!

* Matt. xxiv. 38, 39. Luke xvii. 28—30.

say not I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing. With all thy possessions, know that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked. Still be counselled to buy the gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich ; the white raiment that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness may not appear ; and anoint thine eyes with eye-salve, that thou mayst see, lest the things that belong to thy peace should be hidden from thy view. Remember what the Lord God has done to the people chosen above all the people of the earth, and to the place in which he condescended to place his name and his glory. Surrounded as thou art, O my country, with awful monuments of the righteous displeasure of God, fear, lest he should say of thee, " Shall I not visit for these things ? shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this ? "

V. It must here be distinctly stated that what nations soever may be comprehended within the circumference of the territory over which we have hastily glanced, none of these nations will perish, merely on account of their territorial relation. As some nations beyond these limits may possess the spirit of anti-christ and perish ; so should a nation be found within these limits testifying against anti-christ, that nation shall surely live. In this view of the subject then, the probability of our national ruin will be proportioned to the probability of our national coalition with the anti-christian confederacy of the last days. To a reflecting mind, not warped by

political prepossessions, and free from the domination of fashion in thinking, it must seem exceedingly probable that England will fall in the battle of Armageddon, because it is probable that England will enter into the anti-christian confederacy. Our national tendencies to this confederation, seem more than indicated by the favours we have conferred upon the church of Rome ; the diffusion of the leaven of infidelity through the land ; and the prevalence of those national crimes, which give energy to infidel principles, and will facilitate the subjugation of British intellect to the domination of all unbelief.

Our national tendency to a place in the grand confederation has been secretly and securely growing for the last thirty years, under the mask of political expediency and necessity. Though no nation, favoured with the light of revelation, can set aside its directions with impunity either in church or state, we have chosen other kinds of policy. Directed by these counsels, for five and twenty years, we have fought the battles of the whore of Babylon. In opposition to the wishes of the people, with the aid of other powers, we have re-established upon the throne of France, the bigotted and bloody house of Bourbon, the zealous adherents of the papal prostitute. Nor has Great Britain been content to afford her own energies in the cause, we have directed and wielded the energies of Europe in favour of the papacy ; and while we have squandered our own treasures and blood we have induced other nations to

squander theirs. While the unrepented blood of British Martyrs, with which the church of Rome made herself drunk and mad, continued to cry to heaven for righteous retribution, we have sent our thousand and tens of thousands to be butchered in her behalf. For the mere gratification of political ambition, or prompted by a thirst for human gore, while we have protested against the papacy at home, we have lavished British intellect, British energy, British treasure, British blood, and hurried millions of immortals with murder in their hands to the tribunal of heaven, to re-establish it in other lands.

Is it then surprising that God has permitted the nation to be infatuated, and at length to give up our national protest, virtually declaring ourselves, in the presence of heaven and earth, a protestant nation no longer? Is it surprising that Great Britain, by whom the fornicatress was formerly abhorred, and from whose foul embrace we had torn ourselves, should again be enamoured of her meretricious charms, and once more drink of the cup of her fornication, and clasp the whorish form to our bosom? Is it surprising that providence should permit the multitude of Briton's sons to clamour for concession to those to whom they had been taught to concede their lives and the lives of their children in a long and bloody war? Is it surprising that at last we have seen the devotees of catholicism admitted to the counsels of the nation, by a majority of our legislators who were sworn to preclude them?

We may call that which we have done by what name we please, but the nature of the deed remains the same. Eloquence and sophistry may attire the political monster in the robes of christian liberality, and the natural rights of man, but it will be found in a form most hateful to God. By this national act we have poured contempt on the authority of God, who has specified in his word the qualifications of those whom we are allowed to admit to the administration of state affairs. We have insulted the majesty of God, by vindicating the indifference of our rulers to the regulation of their decisions by the rules and precepts contained in the Holy Scriptures. We have trampled the glory of God in the dust, by the adoption of another end of human actions subversive of the honour of the supreme. We have defied the power of God by our manifold exertions to give power to those who support the soul-destroying delusions of pretended infallibility. We have virtually declared against the supremacy of God, by re-union with the mother of harlots, who asserts her title to universal dominion. All this we have done with consummate inconsistency. We were among the first of nations to protest against her abominations. From her pollutions and thraldom we escaped, resisting even unto blood her infernal domination and blasphemous usurpations. All this we have done with amazing stupidity. Reason itself suggests the impropriety of entrusting those with power whose avowed principles necessarily involve the abuse of power. That the zeal and ener-

gies even of unsanctified genius should be exerted for the extension of a system equally hostile to civil and religious liberty, is truly astounding, I fear, too, that the deed has been done to no inconsiderable extent under the mask of hypocrisy. Honourable exceptions in every class, and exceptions as respectable for number as for character, I doubt not, may be found; but still it is too manifest that multitudes have played a deceitful part. How can a consistent catholic, who believes that the church is the sovereign of all governments, seek a place in a government that legislates for the church? How can a protestant churchman, who believes the king to be the head of the church, seek a place in the government for catholics who believe that he is the vassal of the Pope? How can dissenters, who believe that there is no connexion between the church and the state, either desire to be members themselves of that government which rules the church, or wish the catholics to be recognized there, who maintain that all civil power emanates from ecclesiastical? While, however, we have exposed ourselves to these suspicions, we have persevered and accomplished what we finally call Catholic Emancipation. Emancipation! from what? from poverty and starvation? from ignorance and oppression? No: no: we have cheated Ireland. We have not delivered her at all. We have elevated a few of her sons to the honours of legislation, while we are bound by allegiance * to preclude them.

* The statement which I have here made will, of course, provoke many to

There is a singular indication of protestant infatuation, I am aware, exemplified by some who advocate the papal cause. While papists themselves have the

charge me with intolerance towards my Roman Catholic brethren. The charge, however, I manfully deny, and defy every accuser to substantiate it by an appeal to reason or facts, or common sense. I can adopt the language of my friend, Mr. Thorp, of Bristol, in his late speech against the claims of the Roman Catholics, with the same kind feelings with which I am sure it was uttered by his generous spirit.—“No man in the British Empire can be more ready to render good service to the extent of his power to a Roman Catholic, or to acknowledge the social virtues by which a virtuous Roman Catholic is adorned, than I am. No man would sooner trust to the oath, or even the promise, of an honest Roman Catholic, in the civil transactions of life, and in all matters in which the Catholic Faith, the interests and authority of the Catholic Church, and the dominancy of the Catholic Empire are not concerned, than I would. I distinguish between men and principles; and while I love the man, self-preservation urges me to oppose the admission of his principles into the Protestant constitution of my country. I respect the honest Catholic; and maintain that he is a far more consistent and honourable character than the Athiestical and Protestant coadjutor; but I abjure, abhor, and detest every from my heart.” I will add, too, that they are entitled to the same freedom, the same protection, in the exercise of their religion, as myself. A member of the Catholic communion may be, I doubt not, a member of the mystical body of Christ and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven. The Catholic I am ready to admit to my study, to my friendship; and would join with him in converse, in prayer, and praise. Catholic Ireland I would relieve from distress, and join with all my Protestant brethren in petitioning parliament to remove the causes of her woe. I would even rejoice to correct the abuses of the Protestant church in Ireland, to ameliorate the condition, and bless with domestic comfort and prosperity the Catholic population; and rather than force one farthing from the hand of a Catholic, to support a Protestant preacher, would give a pound to support the Catholic priest.

What’s all this, and yet deny them Emancipation! I really believe I am correct in my statement, when I affirm, that this vague and indefinite term has deceived multitudes. It is not Emancipation, but elevation to the honours and powers and places of the government that has been thoughtlessly granted them, and for which the infatuated or designing clamourers have contended as the rights of the Catholics. But why should the Catholic members of the body

honesty to deny that their religious system is changed in a single principle or a single feature ; while they maintain, indeed, that catholicism is unchanged and

politicians be deprived of their *rights* on account of their religious sentiments ? This is another jingle of words with which the Protestant novitiate, the deisticalized unitarian, and the undisguised infidel, have rung the illusory changes of liberalism from one end of the land to the other. The question is not about *rights*, but *privileges, honours, powers*. No man has a native right to a seat in the government of England but according to law. But the law, while it conducts the members of the government to their seats, teaches them that they are raised to the honours of the British nation, for the welfare of the realm, and that by neglecting *this*, they forfeit *those*. If it be further asked, why preclude any from the *honours* of the nation on account of their religious opinions ? I reply ; that all, whose opinions, whether religious, political, commercial, philosophical, or of any other description ; all, whose opinions disqualify them to rule for the welfare of the realm, ought to be precluded by gates of brass and bars of iron. No man is fit to have the honours of legislation conferred upon him, still less to talk of them as his political birth-right, whose head, and heart, and hands are not adjusted to the sacred work of promoting the happiness of the land. Well ! but may not a catholic be as well qualified to rule for the welfare of a country as any other man ? This is not the question ; the question is, even though a government all Catholichas ruled a nation well, the question is this—Can a Catholic legislate for the welfare of a *Protestant* nation ? I answer, then, without hesitation, it is impossible. As soon should a Mahometan legislate for the welfare of a Christian nation, an Atheist for a nation worshipping God, as a Catholic for a Protestant realm. Though some, perhaps, may be ready to say that a Mahometan or an Atheist would make as good and might make better politicians, than multitudes who worship God and are called Christians, and, therefore, see not still why a Catholic may not be eligible to political services amongst Protestants. I still affirm that it is impossible. Were it, as some contend, a purely political question ; were it possible for men to act in a government that legislates for religion without acting for or against religion, or interfering with any of the modifications of religion—still the Catholic would be wholly disqualified for a seat in the government of this Protestant nation ; and not of this nation only, but of any other Protestant nation ; nor of Protestant nations only, but of all nations not Catholic. A Protestant, as such, has no principles that disqualify him for a place in any government purly political, but a Catholic, from his heart, believes a creed

unchangeable, our most penetrating protestants perceive another and a better spirit, a spirit all compliant and submissive to protestant power. In this country it has been under restraint, but no improvement

that renders him every way incompetent to the duties of any political station, save in a Catholic country. Nor will it alter the case to say, that a Catholic may sacrifice his Catholicism to political expediency, because in that case he ceases to be a Catholic, or what is worse, a traitor to his religion; and whether the one or the other, qualified to sacrifice the welfare of the realm to political expediency, or to prove the traitor of the cause in whose service he enters. This note is already extended beyond the bounds prescribed to me, or I would enlarge on this article, and prove to a demonstration, from the records of Catholicism, that a Catholic is by far more disqualified for a place in the Protestant government of this nation than an Atheist, an Idiot, or a Madman. Vide the first and second speeches of the Rev. W. Thorp, on the Catholic Claims; the first printed in the year 1813, the second, 1828.

A word or two I cannot forbear to add, in the way of anticipation. Some may say, that seeing the deed is done, it is better to let it pass, and make the best we can of a bad matter. But should this feeling generally pervade the land, it will evince to the world that our Protestant energies are paralyzed? Catholicism will make the best of those movements in which Protestantism shall slumber and sleep. No length of concession, no stupendous alteration, in any department of the constitution, will be viewed with fear by the government, if the nation, by suffering this mournful affair to pass unnoticed and forgotten, shall teach them that they have only to devise and execute with promptitude, the most daring plans, and what commotion soever there may be while the matter is agitated in parliament, all will be peaceful dormancy in a day, when the deed is done. The Papacy, which has retained a prominent station in this Protestant country under a load of obloquy, and onward marched in defiance of all the hostile bands of Protestant sectarians, will, if we cease our protest now she is elevated to an equality with the reformed churches, proceed with more rapid and lengthened strides, towards that supreme dignity on which her eye is ever fixed, and for which her heart, both day and night, with ardour beats. If, in short, we fail as a nation, to testify against Catholic Elevation, the deed will become a national crime, as well as a piece of political expediency, by which we shall justly become a partaker of the plagues that are prepared for Babylon the Mother of Harlots.

has taken place, and though the beast has looked mildly on the keeper while fed by his hand, let him loose again, give him his liberty, and like his symbol in Daniel and John, he will be fierce exceedingly, and devour much flesh : reformation, indeed, is not even pretended, it is roundly denied, in fact, by all the votaries of Rome, how much soever the abettors of catholic elevation may wish it to be supposed ; the change is in protestant Britain not catholic Ireland. Yes, though catholicism is unchanged, and still lays claim to infallibility, and virtually justifies the foulest deeds she ever perpetrated ; though catholicism has dyed her garments in the blood of saints and still remains unrepentant of her darkest machinations ; though she is ever ready to re-act the direful deeds, from the repetition of which she has merely been restrained by the deprivation of power, we have laid aside the zeal of our opposition to her proud pretensions, we have put off the garments which were purified from her contaminations, and have received her again into the bosom of the land. Though catholicism only waits for the opportunity to attempt our utter subversion as a protestant state ; though catholicism is and must be essentially inimical to the temporal and eternal welfare of the children of men ; though she has neither authoritatively renounced her imaginary infallibility, nor sincerely expressed the slightest disapprobation of her former tyrannical measures, and, in fact, can give no satisfactory guarantee against similar enormities in future,

seeing she retains her infallibility, we have united to give our power to the beast, with shouts of self-gratulation; though motives the most weighty have conspired to prevent our alliance with the abomination of the earth; though the word of God and the welfare of man forbade our coalition with the mistress of fornicators; though all history of the past and all experience of the present equally demand entire separation from her; though the oracles of truth give us no hope of her future reformation, but unveils the consummation of her degeneracy; though the dread denunciations of heaven are thundered against her in the sacred books; though the same accents command us to come out from Babylon lest we should partake of her plagues; though we have the sure word of prophecy in our hands and their contents expounded in our ears; though we see her judgment hastening, together with the destruction of all in league for her support; yet, regardless of the paramount authority of divine revelation, resolved to regulate our movements by human expediency, we have imagined that the sufferings of Ireland might be removed by encouraging and smiling on the papacy, the true source of national distress, and in defiance of the angel who is preparing to pour out the contents of the seventh vial upon the whole seat of the beast, with hasty and determined steps we have run to an alliance which threatens to involve us in one common ruin.

The nations, I believe, will not perish as papal, nor am I at all apprehensive that the power of the papacy

will regain its ancient splendour and strength. It seems plain enough to me, that the grand confederacy against the Son of God will be avowedly infidel, Anti-christ in full form, and that under this character the beast will be destroyed and go into perdition. The papacy, with all its boast of being unchanged and unchangeable, will put on the infidel form and enter into the composition of the man of sin, the son of perdition, whom the Lord will consume with the spirit of his mouth and destroy by the brightness of his coming. Surely it cannot be deemed a thing incredible, that the whole papal world should be given up to a strong delusion to believe a lie and perish, when by a delusion no less real, though less pernicious, it has been spell-bound for 1200 years. Nor will it seem transcendently marvellous, if England, having received with open arms, and laden with the honours of legislation, the deluded devotees of the pope, herself deluded from stern consistency, should proceed with her associates into all the depths of infidel delusion. The palpable change that has taken place not in the papacy but in protestantism, was, till within these few years, equally incredible as that the nation should become infidel in its character, and is alone sufficient to indicate that we are prepared, should political expediency require it, to discard our christianity, as we have done our protestantism. If the recent change has resulted from the versatility of the protestants, and not from any change in the papists, either our forefathers, who ratified their protestantism

by their blood, were all wrong, egregiously wrong, or we are so ; for, to argue in favour of such a change of measures, from any change of circumstances, is to make expediency the rule of human conduct, rather than the unbending word of God. And what in fact is this but embryo infidelity ? Who can fail to see, that by this national transaction we have not only entered into closer connexion with the papacy, and thereby increased the probability of our final fall with her, but have also given occasion to fear, that mutually infidelized, we shall drink of that cup without mixture, which is preparing for the apostate nations of christendom ? Catholic elevation, the true appellative of this British deed, and not Catholic emancipation ; Catholic elevation to a participation of the honours of government in a protestant nation, is the child of infidelity. Nurtured at the bosom of the mother of harlots, and dandled on the knees of political expediency, it will rapidly grow to gigantic form, and usurp at once the powers of church and state, opposing and exalting himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped ; sitting as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.

By this act the government has considerably weakened the hold which the hand of religion had of the consciences of men. The government has acknowledged catholicism to be any thing rather than a modification of anti-christian apostacy. If the church of Rome be *not* an apostate church, the church of England,

the church of Scotland, and every other Protestant church, is a schismatic church, which has rent the body of Christ, and of which it is the sin of schism to be a member. If the church of Rome *be* an apostate church, then, by elevating her to an equality with protestant churches, we declare our adherence to some rule of action, independent of and opposed to the word of God. Can these statements be denied without asserting that Christ has no church at all—that there is no such thing as an apostacy—that popery and protestantism are the same thing? Will not infidelity, which treats all church government as nothing but an expensive engine of the state, employ the fact as a potent instrument to carry on its formidable designs? Must not the government recede and retrace, or proceed to a precipice the most appalling to a protestant, a patriotic, a christian heart? If they resolve to proceed, what is there in the state of things to retard their progress? Do not multifarious circumstances conspire to goad them onward in the dread career? Seducing spirits are abroad of whose wiles we shall do well to take heed. There is every indication that Great Britain is preparing to take a part in the infidel confederacy of the last days. This conclusion I deduce, not from the fact that religious service is performed in the land on the principles of pure deism; or that periodical publications upon the same principles, which systematically advocate the cause of unbelievers, in opposition to the sacred scriptures, obtain a considerable circulation; or

that infidel missionaries should preach to the people, all the words of human reason, as able to make them wise unto salvation, through practical morality.—These indeed are new and ominous signs, sufficient to make the land tremble, from the sovereign in his palace to the peasant in his cottage; but there are signs more portentous than these signs, which indicate the propensity of Britons to consummate the apostacy already begun.

See, my brethren, see how that death-like indifference prevails in the christian church. Behold how lightly the truths of christianity are prized, how little their power is felt, and how the bustle and exterior parade of public religious meetings, a new form of conformity to the world, chiefly maintained by those who profess to believe that the kingdom of Christ will not come with observation, are generally substituted for the mortification of the lusts of the flesh, and the crucifixion of indwelling sin.

See again the effect of unsanctified, superficial knowledge and learning. Men stalk abroad in the pride of intellect, and swell with the sufficiency and inspiration of human reason. Having penetrated the surface of earth, and discovered what they never looked for; having crossed the Atlantic and arrived at distant shores of which they had not dreamed; having ascended a few yards in the air without appearing to be any nearer the sun; having recovered the alphabet of language and science, and set a few mechanical wheels to work; we make the land to ring with glad exclamation. This

enlightened age!—the age of reason!—millenial dawn! Hence also our suspension of solicitous concern for the illumination of the Holy Ghost; hence the elevation of intellectuality to the chair of faith. Hence too our boasted demonstrations of the moral and natural perfections of God, and the truth of natural and revealed religion, by pure reason; and hence finally will come, the sufficiency of human reason, without revelation to guide intelligent beings to happiness, and holiness, and God.

Behold again the influence of the same leaven in what is called the Evangelical part of the religious world. Not only must these orthodox believers have the testimony of God to recline upon, but the collateral securities of fallible men, as if the drop could swell the ocean, the taper illumine the sun, and the God of truth were not to be trusted one step further than we can see. The more you examine, the more you will be convinced, that, notwithstanding the loud boastings of our evangelical religionists, infidelity to the plain declarations of Holy Scripture prevails. Propose to their acceptance some article of revealed truth, which they have not learned from their catechism, and though you support it by the only demonstration on which the superstructure of divine truth can rest, Thus saith the Lord—they gaze—they doubt—they deny. Charge them with incredulity, and they reply, Nay, we believe the bible as much as you or any others, we only differ about the sense. They doubt whether Israel and Judah means

Israel and Judah ; whether restore means restore ; whether the coming of Christ does not mean sending his spirit in a more copious manner ; whether reigning before his ancients in Jerusalem gloriously, does not mean dwelling in the heart by the Holy Ghost ; whether the resurrection of the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus and the word of God, does not mean the conversion of sinners to newness of life, who have lived in rebellion against God and his Christ. Such is the form of modern faith, the kind of believing in these latter days ; and were the world full of such faith, such believing as this, to the end of this dispensation, judge ye whether the interrogatory prediction of the Son of God would not be literally verified, “ When the Son of Man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth.”

And to what source shall we look for a reformation ? Can we divine from what quarter Protestant emancipation can come ? The pulpit ? Alas ! alas ! that is occupied by some—by many faithful and devoted men, who retire from the labours of the sabbath with a heavy heart. It is occupied, however, by a still greater number, who seek any thing rather than the souls of their hearers. Yes, and in defiance of the labours of the faithful, and to the gratification of the unfaithful preachers of the day, this melancholy state of things has transpired. Shall we look to the press to awaken us from our lethargy, and teach us to live by faith ? Never did the press send forth so many volumes for so

few shillings as now. But the press, like the pulpit, sends forth the deadly as well as the life-giving stream. The stream impregnated with poison is, nevertheless, the most palatable, and at this stream the multitude is daily drinking. Human fancies, not divine realities, best please the polished race of Tom Paine's Age of Reason. But we have now a metropolitan university. From this fount of wisdom too, conduits will be conveyed to every denomination of christians in the land. Yes: but not the wisdom that cometh from above, but that from the abyss beneath, the wisdom that is earthly, sensual and devilish. The London University, like the French Republic, is without Christ, without God, an atheistical establishment in the metropolis of the most distinguished nation of christendom. Many of its members are convinced that it is infidel at the very core. Some individuals have been urged to become subscribing members to counteract the infidel spirit that has taken possession of the splendid form. And others have said that they remain on the list to be drags upon its infidel wheels. It is a vain thing to argue in favour of such an institution, that it has nothing to do with religion. For were this true, it would be easy to reply, that neutrality in religion, in no case justifiable, is still less so in an establishment that would supersede the schools of the prophets. In this case, however, neutrality is impossible. Religion has to do with it, and it must have to do with religion. The religion of the Son of God asks for admission there, but the doors are closed

against her. She reiterates her claims to regulate all the internal movements of the institution, and her claims are trampled underfoot. To say the least, this boasted production of this enlightened age, holds up the science of salvation, the person of Jesus, and the counsels of eternal grace, to comparative contempt.

I know these remarks will be called illiberal, if not by a harder name, even by liberal souls of this enlightened age. I will, notwithstanding, venture to affirm, that infidelity is going on from conquering to conquer under the garb of liberalism, unobserved. A more dangerous spirit never pervaded the world than the unhallowed benevolence of modern times. The very name of liberalism ought to be sufficient to startle those who believe, that every thought should be brought into subjection to the obedience of Christ. The religion of Christ is a system of restraint; it restrains the judgment, it restrains the heart, it restrains the life; requiring every man to think soberly and according to truth, to feel as a dependent creature, a guilty sinner, a regenerate soul ought to feel, and to do all things in which he engages, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and to the glory of God. The liberalism of the day is a system of freedom—freedom especially in religion—the freedom of the judgment, the freedom of the heart, the freedom of the life; permitting every man to think freely, whether correctly or incorrectly, being of less consequence than was supposed by our fathers; to dispose of his fund of feeling, if he chooses, to a frivolous or serious

party, a game of cards or backgammon before or after family prayer, psalms, hymns and spiritual songs, or songs of love and martial glory ; and to devote the sabbath to friendly visits or public worship, to journeying or to rest, as most convenient, while through the week he is allowed to attend the theatre or a missionary meeting, the tavern or the bible society. The religion of the Son of God says, " Deny thyself, take up thy Cross, follow the lamb whithersoever he goeth ; " but liberalism says, Indulge in lawful amusements, enjoy the pleasures of life, follow the Lamb only when he leads to honour and renown. The benevolence of the religion of Jesus makes the love of God and truth the centre from which all kindly feelings irradiate in every direction, to the extremities of the whole intelligent system ; but the benevolence of liberalism stands ready to sacrifice at the shrine of human reason, all the peculiarities of divine revelation, and embraces with equal tokens of regard, the unitarian and the trinitarian, the papist and the protestant, because, in fact, selfishness is the grand spring which excites and regulates the movements of these generous souls. Though we boast of this liberality as the brightest ornament which adorns the church in these happy times, it is but another modification of self-love or personal insubordination to the rigid discipline and unyielding claims of truth. The import of every action performed by this spurious liberality, is neither more nor less than this, Let me alone, and I will let you alone ; you shall do or think

as you please, if you will let me do and think as I please. Is not this the leaven of infidelity ; one of the manifold forms which unbelief may assume, and still retain its essential character of opposition to the explicit revelation of God's will ?

There is one notorious fact ever present to our view, which proves to a demonstration, the spurious nature of modern liberality, and still further evinces the progress of the infidel leaven. If it were the true christian love that heaved our bosom, and excited to us all the cordiality of feeling we so fondly indulge and frankly avow, would not its direct tendency to the utter subversion of the divisions of the church be apparent to all ? Unity should characterize the church of Christ—the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace—for there is one body, and one Spirit, even as we are called in one hope of our calling ; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in all the members of that one body. But where are the signs of growing approximation to this unity ? Are not the rents in the body of Christ multiplying in defiance of all our boasted liberality ? Not only among those who avowedly differ in many things, are divisions creeping in concerning things in which they professed to agree, as in our Bible, Missionary, and other societies, but also among those who have or should have no contending interests, no conflicting passions, but what a little christian love, which hopeth all things, endureth all things, and seeketh not her own,

would easily harmonize. Let the several separations from the Wesleyan Methodists be duly considered, and they will illustrate and prove this article. Each separation must set up a new order, till the Wesleyans, the New Connexion, the Primitive, the Independent, and Protestant Methodists, form so many bodies hostile to each other. I pretend not to judge or condemn this or that division of the methodists, any more than this or that division of christians of other denominations ; I only say, and this I will say in the face of the whole world, that our manifold divisions are not compatible with the supremacy of christian love, and that modern liberality which nurtures sectarianism and schism, is a spurious liberality, engendered by the secret leaven of infidelity, the insubordination of human intellect to the decisions of eternal truth, which is one and evermore the same.

And whence but from the same restless spirit of insubordination to the dominion of revealed truth, is the wide spreading rage for the dissolution of the union that subsists between the church and the state ? Why contend so vehemently for the emancipation of British polities for the control of the principles of religion ? If you banish the interference of religion from the affairs of the administration and the procedure of the government, an atheist may be as eligible to office as the man who fears God. Politics, however, cannot be separated from religion, without trampling underfoot the oracles of God, which direct and control the minister of state as well as the minister of the word. He, who is the

Chief-shepherd and Bishop of souls, is the Prince of the kings of the earth, and to him, who is King of kings and Lord of lords, all mortal sovereigns and nobles, and rulers are accountable for their official conduct. If then our governors rule under Christ, and are accountable to him, verily they ought to rule for him and with an eye to his glory ; and, consequently, they should be religious governors, and their government a religious government. No government, I allow, should legislate in the church, and usurp the prerogatives of Christ the only Head of the body ; but every government should legislate as the servants of Christ and members of his church. Exemption from His authority, by whom kings reign and princes decree judgment, is the character of an infidel government ; and only as the body politic becomes infidelized, can the mass of the people desire the policy and religion of their country to be separated. Such a separation, however, there is too much reason to apprehend. England, by having united herself to the church of Rome, against which she formerly protested with the solemnities of an oath, has inconsiderately adopted the infidel sentiment, that religion has nothing to do with politics. Every thing around us seems favourable to the diffusion of this sentiment ; no man is or can be wholly free from the leaven which is secretly and silently working in every part of the land ; and multitudes will apply it to other departments of civil life, till at length we may be told without a blush, Religion has nothing to do with education—with com-

merce—with domestic economy—with the marriage union—with individual conduct in the world.

It has often been asserted and as often denied, that the principles of infidelity are recognized merely as an apology for vice. The charge may not, perhaps, in all cases be true, in some cases it may be false, unless understood in a qualified sense, but surely there are instances in which moralized infidels would allow it to be correct. To examine or decide this matter is no part of my present design; a statement far less critical or metaphysical we propose to amplify in concluding this part of our discourse; it is this—that the prevalence of national crimes, favourable to the diffusion of infidelity characterizes the days in which we live, and still more excites alarm for the destiny of Great Britain.*

Whether men embrace infidel principles or not that they may indulge in sin, to indulge in sin cannot fail to dispose mankind to infidelity. It is impossible that a man, against whom the bible shuts the gates of heaven, and whom it assures that hell from beneath moves to meet him at his coming, can wish from his heart that the bible may be true. Self-love, the sovereign ruler of all his actions, and the love of earthly, sensual, and devilish pleasures, conspire to produce in man's degenerate heart a secret wish that the scriptures may

* This article, it will be remembered by those who heard the sermon, was greatly abridged, through lack of time. The author, never rapid in his delivery, and unaccustomed to read his sermons, by reading on this occasion was slower than usual.

not be true. Adduce what evidence soever you can to such a man, that holy men of God wrote and spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, it will not, it cannot appear perfectly conclusive, because he wishes it may not be so. But propose to him a few reasons, it matters not how weak, how absurd, how contradictory, for questioning the authenticity, the genuineness, the inspiration of the sacred books, and he deems them too powerful to be withstood, most reasonable and worthy of cordial belief, and so harmonious that his ears can dwell upon the sound till his soul is filled with airy dreams, and fantastic wishes are mistaken for demonstrated realities. For the accuracy of these statements I appeal to conscience ; to the conscience of every man, I appeal, whether a believer or an infidel ; the time was when you, christian, alienated from the life of God, and living according to the lusts of the flesh, found it so ; and you sinner, now the slave of carnality and unhallowed passions, find it so, whenever you hear the thunders of Sinai, or the dread denunciations of the gospel of Christ. Is not the dominion of sin, then, favourable to the diffusion of infidel principles ? The more vicious the course pursued by the sinner, is he not the more likely to wish and believe that divine revelation is a cunningly devised fable ? And when crimes the most determined in kind, and the most heavily denounced in the book of God, become general in the land, is there not reason to fear, that infidelity, always in operation, will mightily prevail, and like an over-

whelming torrent carry the mass of the population into the boundless and bottomless gulphs of scepticism.

Whether the national sins of Great Britain are of that determined kind, and pernicious character, which may render the progress of infidelity among us highly probable, I will venture to leave to the decision of every man who has formed an accurate idea of infidelity on the one hand, and of national crime on the other. Infidelity mainly consists in the substitution of something in the place and stead of the testimony of God. A man may believe, and believe the facts and doctrines contained in the scriptures, and yet be an infidel. Although the facts and doctrines believed are recorded by the pen of inspiration, if they who believe them, believe them on some other account, whether that of human testimony, or personal experience, or something which they call the teaching or witness of the spirit, their faith is but a disguised infidelity. Without determining, for instance, which of the schemes of divine truth is most correct, that of John Calvin, or that of John Wesley, it is demonstrable, that the followers of these men, who, though they may receive the very truths of the gospel, receive the truths of the gospel on their authority, have a faith which stands only in the wisdom of men and not in the power of God. There is less difference than we fondly suppose between the deist, the unitarian, the consistent quaker, the evangelical enthusiast, and the sober metaphysical divine. Each, in fact, if not inconsistent with himself, sets up

a something instead of divine testimony as the bases of his faith, and that something is pretty much the same, though called by different names. The deist calls it the light of nature, the unitarian the light of reason, the quaker the light within, the enthusiast the light of experience, and the grave metaphysician the evidence of demonstration. With regard to national crimes, it is necessary to form some definite idea, ere we can see that those of Great Britain are favourable to the success of infidelity. Some contend that the body politic is to be considered as acting through the head, and so the deeds of the sovereign and the acts of the legislature are the deeds and acts of the nation. At the bar of human policy they may be such, but not at His bar who sees every thing in the light of truth, and determines by that light the destinies of nations as well as of individuals. It is very possible that the royal and legislative procedure of the land may be diametrically opposed to the will and pleasure of the people ; and then, while crimes might be committed by the body, not only without the example, but in defiance of the piety of the sovereign and a God-fearing legislature, the land would still be deemed a holy nation ; or while the people maintained their faith in God, and were devoted to his glory, they might be accounted a generation of vipers, because the king, and his nobles, and the senators of the land were vile. National crimes are those, according to scripture, which generally prevail in a nation. That many of the sins of Great Britain have an air of

nationality about them will hardly be questioned. We not only feast upon the fruits of our father's transgressions, and bask in the pleasures they procured with unhallowed hands, but we perpetuate their crimes, we re-act their deeds, we refine upon their iniquities, we multiply their sins, and amidst greater privileges, without many of their redeeming qualities, we have added articles of impiety to the catalogue of British transgressions unknown to our sleeping sires. Examine the sins of the nation, and see if the avarice, the oppression, the barter in fellow-immortals, the vain confidence in national resources, the most daring and shameful deeds of day and night throughout the land, are not of that very character which exposes us as a people to the domination of the son of perdition, the last and most dreadful form of the man of sin—INFIDELITY. This is he who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; and who will as God sit in the temple of God, and hold up himself as the only God. His coming, saith the Apostle in the second chapter of his second epistle to the Thessalonians, is after the working of Satan, with all power, and signs, and lying wonders, and in all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish, because they received not the love of the truth that they might be saved. And he adds, that for this cause, God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie; that they all might be damned who believe not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

In conclusion, I adopt, with little variation, the language of my esteemed friend, the Rev. W. Thorp, and that of my favorite author, Bishop Horsley. The former in his second Speech on the Catholic Claims, and the preface to that speech, and the latter, in his Critical Disquisitions on the Eighteenth Chapter of Isaiah. I know that I am treading on delicate ground, but these are the times that try men's hearts. I love the Princes of the House of Brunswick, and long may they live to rule these kingdoms, upon the same principles that have hitherto guided their conduct; but their best safety consists, in their faithfully fulfilling the conditions of their compact with the people. It is still said there is no danger, for the times are changed. It is true the times have changed, and with the change of the times, some Englishmen have lost the good sense by which their fathers were distinguished. But think of the march of intellect! The strut of idiocy and atheism. But science is making rapid progress; the boundaries of human knowledge are enlarged, and are still enlarging. True; but no advance of science, no enlargement of the boundaries of human knowledge, can change infallible councils, or the jurisprudence of an infallible empire. But the Roman Catholics themselves are changed. Hear the answer to this assertion, from an able and accredited apologist of the Roman Catholics, the late Mr. Plowden, of Bristol. "If any man says, or means to insinuate, that the modern Roman Catholics differ in one iota from their predeces-

sors, he is either deceived himself, or he means to deceive others. *Semper eadem* is no less emphatically descriptive of our religion than of our jurisprudence." But surely there can be no danger, it is replied, amidst the noon-tide light of the nineteenth century. Never, my brethren, in any age, was the saying of the poet more strikingly exemplified, than it is in the age in which we live, "a little knowledge is a dangerous thing." To what cause, but this superficial knowledge, are we to ascribe the infidelity and atheism of the present age? Whence, besides the coalition, the horrid coalition of atheists, catholics, and ministers of the gospel, that marks the peculiar character of modern times? To what other cause can be ascribed, the wretched, blundering policy with which these kingdoms, and particularly Ireland, has been governed for the last five and twenty years? Whence too, that lamentable prostration of the understanding which we daily witness, and those oracular proofs of some evil influence, in the outpourings of imbecility, and the *æstus* of liberalism which comes over the deluded advocates of a destructive principle? The truth is, that knowledge is more rapidly communicated and more widely spread than in former times; but it is almost every where proportionably shallow and useless, though it may adorn the valleys and heighten the beauty of the scenes of human life, in which we seek the recreations of our vacant hours. The march of intellect has increased to a speed so far beyond what its actual

strength can maintain, that an overwhelming lassitude must be the consequence; and we shall find that the understanding and knowledge of the present day, have grown so unnaturally fast, that there is reason to fear they will drop off in a consumption. Were the minds of men indeed sustained by the wholesome words of sound doctrine, our apprehensions might subside; but alas! the heavenly manna is loathed, while the artificial delicacies of classic lore, and the high-seasoned productions of scepticism are eagerly devoured. Indifference to the signs of the times is criminal. Misconstruction of them may be dangerous. I cannot, however, I confess, discern any immediate signs of the fall of anti-christ. I fear, I see too clearly the rise, instead of the fall, of the anti-christ of the west. Or, rather I fear, I see him rapidly advancing to full stature and ripe age. His rise, strictly speaking, the beginning of the monster was in the apostolic age. For it were easy to trace the pedigree of French philosophy, Bavarian illumination, and all the modifications of jacobinism, radicalism, or insubordination, up to the first heresies. But it is now we see the adolescence of that man of sin, or rather of lawlessness, who is to throw off all the restraints of religion, morality, and custom, and undo the bands of civil society. That son of perdition, who is to rise out of an apostacy—not a constructive apostacy; never understood to be such, by those to whom the guilt has been imputed; but an open undisguised apostacy. That son of perdition, who

shall be neither a protestant, nor a papist; neither christian, jew, nor heathen: who shall worship neither God, angel, nor saint; who will neither supplicate the invisible Majesty of heaven, nor fall down before an idol. He will magnify himself against every thing that is called God, or is worshipped! and with a bold flight of impiety, soaring far above his precursors and types in the times of paganism, the Sennacheribs, the Nebuchadnezzars, the Antiochus's, and the heathen emperors, will claim divine honours to himself exclusively, and consecrate an image of himself. I doubt not, but this monster will be made an instrument of that pruning, which the vine must undergo. I am afraid to say, that the judgment will begin, or fall with the greatest severity, in that part of the church which most needs the incision of the pruning-knife. For when I consider the superstitions introduced in the rites of worship, in some parts; the unwarrantable innovations, in the form of church-government, in others; the relaxation of discipline, the lukewarmness, the neglect and violation of the ordinary private duties, the frequent breach of the ten commandments, in those parts where the doctrine, the form of government, and the rites of public worship seem to be the most conformable to the model of the primitive ages; I am afraid to say, which of the various branches of the church of Christ it is, in which the separating incision may be the most needed. I see, therefore, nothing in the subversion of the ancient monarchy of France, but what is

cause of alarm to every government upon earth ; nothing in the subversion of the Gallician church, but what is cause of alarm to every church in christendom ; nothing in the sufferings and degradation of the Pope himself during the triumphs of Napoleon, which can be cause of exultation and joy, in the heart of any christian ; nothing in the indignities and insults offered to the papal priesthood by low-born miscreants, a disgrace to the reformed religion, which they profess, but what should excite horror and indignation : I see nothing in all these things, though terrible and terrifying beyond my powers of description or conception ; in all these things, I see nothing like a cause of triumph to the reformed churches, no great era marked in the page of prophecy, but such symptoms only of judgments to come as should awaken all to repentance ; lest all, who repent not, should likewise perish. The reign of anti-christ, I fear will succeed that of the papacy ; I fear, too, that it will be equally absolute and extensive ; I fear that Great Britain's neck will submit to the impious yoke ; I fear that our alliance with the papacy and our national crimes are hurrying us on to share in the fate of the anti-christian confederacy : and, as there is ground, I think, in the prophecies for the notion of the early fathers, that Palestine is the stage on which anti-christ, in the height of his impiety, will perish, at the second advent of the Son of God ; and, as this will be the event which will verify Joel's predictions concerning the Valley of Decision, and those of John relating to

Armageddon, together with multitudes of other prophetic portions which pourtray the terrors of the great day of God Almighty : I fear that in the host that will be mustered against Christ in that day, and be destroyed by the brightness of his coming, England will occupy a prominent station. Whether you agree with me in these sentiments, my brethren, I know not. In this, I know, you will agree ; that whether we become avowedly infidel or not, the only sure anchor of hope to any nation, is God's favour, and the only means of his favour, obedience to the gospel of his Son. This gospel is preached among us at home, it is diffused by us abroad, but neither at home nor abroad does it receive from those who hear, that obedience which it demands ; it is, indeed, disobeyed, disputed, denied, blasphemed, in defiance of heaven, to the sore provocation of divine wrath, which will shortly be poured out upon the guilty nations : Be wise, therefore, O ye kings ; be instructed, ye judges of the earth : Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling ; kiss the Son lest he be angry with you, and ye perish from the way ; when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they, and only they, that put their trust in him.